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## The Wolf of Kahlotus

A ROMANCE OF THE NORTHWEST

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CLINTON McKEAN, United States district attorney for the State of Oregon, passed swiftly through the crowded anteroom, seated himself behind the heavy oak table in his own office, and put his finger on the button which announced to Miss Myrtle Point, busily pounding the typewriter among all those waiting people, that he was ready for his daily round. He wanted to knock some one down—preferably Mr. James Tussy, with whom, the night before, he had smoked so many cigars and talked generalities so confidentially that it seemed to McKean as if the man must confess to being the clever German organizer about whom the War Department had telegraphed so urgently.

Instead, Mr. James Tussy, bland, clean-shaven, and exquisitely dressed, deplored the high price of beef. Still, he murmured,

the stern necessity for being patriotic was what really deprived his precious great Dane of a knuckle of veal on Wednesday and of a beefsteak on Saturday night—delicacies to which he had been accustomed since puppyhood.

"He pines," he said. "Poor baby!"

Then the clock in the Journal Tower went on three, and McKean said good night.

He pressed his thumb so hard against the button that his whole hand ached and a faint buzzing sound was distinctly audible. He knew he had picked upon the right man, though Tussy did not tally absolutely with the description. He had no mustache, for one thing. Also, he had no incriminating papers. The hotel detective had gone through all his luggage and his clothes while he slept. But not one person in a thousand could write a description that

would identify any one; and if his work was clever, as reported, what did he need with papers?

Cursing most unwarrantably, McKean folded his long, white hands before him on the table and waited.

He was a short, stocky man with prematurely gray hair, a fair, ruddy skin, and eyelashes of astonishing length and thickness. He had a trick of casting down his eyes, too, to show them off. He kept his eyes down when the door opened and shut again quickly. He knew that some one had entered, though there was no sound on the thickly carpeted floor.

"Are you Mr. McKean, the Federal attorney?"

McKean lifted his eyes. They were blue like the edge of a razor, and as keen—not at all the sort of eyes the lashes led you to expect. This little trick of his caught many confident malefactors unawares.

The woman had not left the door, but stood with her back against it, her arm outstretched, her hand upon the knob. She was very smartly dressed in black—a long, black military coat, with a high collar up about her face, and a little three-cornered hat well down over her hair. She wore black low shoes and gray silk stockings, and in one gray-gloved hand she carried a silver-topped cane. Her large gray eyes, set wide apart and warmly shot with brown, met McKean's sudden glare without flinching, and he felt a curious, warm thrill.

"She's a beauty—a lady, and a man's woman. Now, what can she want here?" he thought.

"I am McKean," he said in that voice of his that set even the most wary at their ease. "Sit down and tell me what I can do for you."

"Mr. McKean, I—" She stopped, came away from the door to the table, and laid her walking-stick upon it. "You will laugh at me," she said abruptly.

McKean gave her a chance to admire his lashes, and then shot her another keen glance.

"This is not a place where we laugh," he said. "It is a thing I often regret. Do you really want to talk to me?"

"Yes, sir." She sighed deeply, drew up the chair on her side of the table, and sank into it. "I don't think you know my name," she said.

With an unconscious, boyish gesture she took off her hat and placed it on top of her

cane on the table. Her hair was a pale, shining brown that contrasted strongly with her black brows and gray eyes.

"My name is Ettarre Tolliver. That sounds a big mouthful," she said, smiling faintly and turning back the high collar of her coat.

"I knew you were a beauty," thought McKean; "a big, generous American beauty. Now—"

"But my family call me Torry," she went on. "That is, they did. My two brothers are in France now, and my father was killed—well, he died." She checked herself with an obvious effort, and then went on more collectedly. "It happened yesterday, and so—I came to see you this morning."

McKean sat forward in his chair and frowned.

"Where do you live?" he demanded abruptly.

"Kahlotus," she said. "See here!" With the same free, unconscious grace of movement she rose from the chair and walked to a large map of the State that hung on the wall behind her. "Here you are—here's the road right out of Portland—White House Road, do you see? Right on until it joins the old military road, going east. You turn north at Dustrail and straight through the big timber, Mist—Wildcat—Dunwood"—she checked the places off with a slender brown finger—"Kahlotus. Fairly remote, you see."

She sighed and came back to her chair.

"So it's a town," said McKean.

"Hardly." She looked at him earnestly, searching his non-committal face, evidently in great distress. "There is a post-office. My father owned pretty near the whole works—the range, the wheat-lands—the timber—it's a big-spruce country. He built the road in there; he is—was—Kahlotus."

"Queer name!" commented McKean.

He looked down at his hands to give her time to recover her self-control.

"It's an Indian name," she replied. "There is a legend about the place. That's—that's what I've come to see you about," she added faintly.

"You've come to talk to me about a legend?" McKean still smarted under the humiliation of his failure of the night before, and could not restrain a note of irritation. "Really, Miss—"

"Wait!" The girl gave him a look that made him feel ashamed. "I am beginning

badly, I know; but my father was killed—died—only yesterday, and—well, Mr. McKean, the legend had something to do with his death, though not much, I am very sure of that. I—well, I don't believe in the supernatural. That's why I have come to you."

"Suppose you tell me what happened," said McKean.

"Why," she replied with a straightforwardness that the district attorney found astonishing in a woman, "what happened was this. The day before yesterday my father made a big shipment of wheat to Mist—sixteen truck-loads in all. When he came back yesterday morning, there was a telephone-call from the sheep-camp at Skedee—the herders had gone on a lemon-extract drunk, and one of them had killed another. I begged my father to let me go with him. Since war was declared, and all these labor troubles have begun, the Kahlotus country hasn't been any too safe; but he laughed and rode off alone, as he had done thousands of times before."

She stopped abruptly and fiddled at her walking-stick and hat. It was very plain that she sought in that minute the courage and self-control to continue.

"Mr. McKean," she said with explosive curtness, "he never came back. Last night I waited until twelve o'clock. Then I telephoned Skedee. The Basque there told me he had left early—at five o'clock. By that, at the rate he always rode, he should have been home at nine. I left the telephone, saddled my pony, and rode out to look for him. The night was bright, even if it was cloudy, and I could see his was the only horse that had gone over the trail that day. There was no sign of his coming back until I got to Kingfisher Crossing, where the trail runs into virgin timber. I—I found his body there beside the way."

She stopped, breathing heavily, and fumbled her hat and cane again.

"Wait a moment, Miss Tolliver!" McKean put up his white hand. "You go too fast. You said there was a legend."

"Yes."

"What is it, and in what way do you connect it with finding your father's body there beside the trail?"

"The legend?" She looked at him with sudden interest. "You don't know it? You haven't lived in Oregon very long, if you don't know about the Wolf of Kahlotus."

"No," he said bluntly, "I do not know it; but I am going to right now, if you please."

"Kahlotus," she began, still turning the cane in her hands, "was an Indian chief so powerful that the country took its name from him. When the Hudson Bay traders came down here, one of their factors went over in there and made great friends with Kahlotus. He even rigged him up in a uniform of green cloth, with a coat of arms that he chose for him embroidered on the sleeve. I used to know it all, but I've forgotten the thing now except a coronet worked in gold thread. The story has it that the white man looked upon himself as a loyal employee of the company who was out to get everything Kahlotus had, and who considered that the end justified the means. One fine morning the Indian chief woke up to find himself robbed right and left of all he possessed, and his only daughter came back to die of a beating administered by his trusted white friend, who had betrayed her. Well, Mr. McKean, they say where I come from that Kahlotus was friends with the devil, and that when he saw all that had happened he went out into the big timber and called his wolf, which the Old Nick had told off to protect him and his. The next morning that factor, in his camp ten miles away, did not come out of his tent for his breakfast. So they went in and found his body with the throat torn open, and twice round his tent were the tracks of an enormous wolf. Those Hudson Bay men went away from there without any attempt to get even. Well, soon Kahlotus died—of a broken heart, the story says—and because of what he had suffered he left his wolf in the big timber to be the scourge of white men for any of his people that had the courage to make friends with the devil and so learn to call the beast."

She stopped and stared McKean in the face with a curious defiance, her color mounting rapidly and fading as swiftly away.

"And has any one ever learned the call?"

Her face softened a little, and McKean knew it was because he had not laughed at her story.

"There was one white man torn to death by a wild animal just the other side of Kingfisher Crossing when I was a little girl; but then he was a bad lot."



THERE WAS A QUICK FLURRY OF SKIRTS, AND TORRY TOLLIVER THREW OPEN THE DOOR—

"Your father, I take it, was not?"

If the district attorney had hoped to raise a storm of indignant denial, he was disappointed.

"No." She regarded him very seriously. "My father was a fairly wonderful sort.

I have been educated both at home and abroad, and I am his daughter, so I should be a capable judge."

McKean showed his long lashes in graceful assent.

"But he had enemies," he suggested.



—“THIS LETTER CAME UP ON MY TRAY,” SHE SAID

The girl met his keen glance with the same troubled, seeking look.

“That is what I cannot make out,” she said. “My father had enemies, of course. Every worth-while man has. A man without enemies is a pretty spineless he thing.

He had a whole lot of trouble with the I. W. W.’s last summer. They pulled his camps, they pulled his mills, and there were a good many fires in the wheat; but that was all in the day’s work, and it is still going on. Besides, the I. W. W.’s had no

interest in taking my father's life. They were after the industries he built up. No, no, my father had his enemies, but they were not *that* kind."

"What kind?"

"Why, the kind to take him unawares, unarmed, and with no chance to defend himself."

"You mean he didn't have a gun?"

"My father never carried a gun." McKean thought she spoke proudly, and he liked her for it. "He was a brave man, and greatly respected, even if he was so successful. When war was declared, he did not give one thought to political preferment or personal gain. My two brothers were the first to enlist in the whole Kahlotus country, and my father has regularly paid the full salary of every man who enlisted from his employ."

"You were on good terms with him, of course?"

She flushed up hotly.

"I did quarrel with him," she said with a wonderfully attractive honesty, "but it was because I wanted to marry Chan Channee before he went to France."

"Your father had his way?"

"Yes," she whispered. "My mother died when I was a baby; and now he is dead, and I am alone!"

She bent her head so low that McKean could not see her face, but he felt sure that she was fighting back the tears.

"Now," he said gently, "I should like to make the connection between your father's death and the legend. Or can we eliminate the Wolf of Kahlotus?"

"No," she answered steadily, "we can't—quite. I have told you my father was dead. His shoulder was gashed by the teeth of a beast and his throat torn wide open."

"What?" McKean sat up straight in his chair and forgot his eyelashes. "What became of the horse?" he demanded sharply.

"I heard of the horse this morning on my way to town. A fellow named Ben Longmire found it on the Deep Creek trail, just about dawn, dead and—partly eaten. It had turned off sharp to the left when my father went down, and had raced for its life and—lost."

"Did your father believe in this wolf?"

"Well, you know how one comes to accept the stories that go in the part of the country where one lives."

"Do you?"

"Mr. McKean, I do not believe in the supernatural. If I did, I could not believe that the powers of evil could be loosed to prevail over a man who lived as my father did."

"But you have a theory?" he persisted.

"No, sir, I have nothing to go on but my lack of belief in the supernatural, the fact that we are at war with Germany, and what I found in my father's hand."

"Do all three hang together?"

She smiled a little sadly.

"Only the first and last."

"Then why do you include the third?"

"Because my two brothers and my sweetheart are fighting in France, and"—she paused, and then rushed on—"I have a hunch!"

"What did you find in your father's hand?" said McKean gravely.

For answer she reached across the table and laid on the blotter before him a three-cornered scrap of dark-green cloth torn straight through a coronet worked in gold thread.

## II

CLINTON MCKEAN settled down deep in his chair, and his eyes glittered like steel in the sun.

"Has any one else seen this?"

The girl shook her head. It was plain that she was more excited than she cared to show.

"No; I took it from his hand when I got his body back to the house."

"You told no one?"

"No." She shook her head. "What was the use? In Kahlotus they all believe in the wolf. Besides, I intend to run this thing down. It was not the ghost of a pet wolf of an Indian eighty years dead that killed my father!"

"What sort of a trail is it from your place to Skedee?"

"Oh, good and wide. Two men can ride abreast."

"Could they ride fast abreast?"

"Mr. McKean, my father built that trail. You could race Kahlotus's friend, the Old Nick, through there and try and beat him, too."

"You say your father went up to where he had some sheep?"

She nodded.

"He probably keeps a number of large, fierce sheep-dogs?"

"He does, but it was not a sheep-dog that dragged him about on the ground and killed his horse."

"You say the marks of the feet are large?"

"Yes; but, Mr. McKean, no ordinary timber-wolf could have dragged my father about on the ground, even if he was helpless. He was a big man and very strong."

"And his daughter inherited his strength and stature," thought McKean. "Then you think your father met some one else besides the wolf?" he persisted.

She flushed.

"Yes, I do," she answered bravely; "though I have nothing but the track of a horse and my hunch to confirm that theory."

"Tell me just why you are so sure," he said.

"Well, for one thing, the horse he was riding did not run home. Instead of going straight forward or stopping, when my father fell, it turned off sharp to the left and ran like the wind. You see, ordinarily, one of two things would have happened. The horse would have stopped short, hung around, and then come home; or it would have run on for home without stopping at all. It did not do either. It was driven to the left and ran, because it was pursued, until it was caught and killed. You see—" She hesitated. "There was some one there before my father fell," she said at length.

"Some one there?"

"Yes, Mr. McKean, on that other horse that went no farther than the crossing. The earth is soft everywhere now from the rain, and the marks were plain enough. And it was only from there that the—beast ran after my father's horse."

"But you said your father's throat was torn?"

"That happened afterward."

"Afterward?"

"Why, yes, after the creature had run down the horse and got something to eat. That was why—his throat was only torn," she finished faintly.

"Nonsense!" McKean cleared his throat loudly. "What have you to bear out such an outrageous theory?"

"Nothing." She made a hopeless little gesture and began fiddling her cane again. "It's only a hunch."

"Well, and what started the hunch?"

"He was not killed by *that* beast, I tell you," she asserted with sudden heat.

"Very well," agreed McKean patiently. "Was there anything about the body to convince you of this?"

"Yes—a blow on the head."

"Which he may have got in falling."

"Yes, he may have—if he had fallen on a brick pavement," she answered dryly.

"How much farther on did the tracks of the other horse come?" went on McKean, ignoring this covert thrust.

She lifted her smoldering eyes.

"As far as Kingfisher Crossing," she said. "Then they turned and went back up the trail."

"You—" McKean rose abruptly.

"Where is your father's body?"

Torry Tolliver rose, too, and she was taller than he.

"It is to be buried beside my mother to-morrow morning," she replied.

"Have you notified the sheriff of your county of the murder?"

"No, Mr. McKean. The people around there believe it was the Wolf of Kahlotus. The only thing that puzzles them is what my father could have done to cause him to be hunted down. And even if I play a lone hand, I am determined to get the man behind it all. So why tell what I have found out, to be gossiped over and perhaps get back to my enemy?"

McKean stared at her.

"Good Lord, what a beauty she is, and how tremendously in earnest!" he thought.

"See here," he asked her, "has any one seen the wolf lately, or is this appearance a sudden, lone demonstration?"

"The talk about it has revived greatly within the year, since war was declared," she replied earnestly. "It has always been a rumor that it was impossible to run down. That—" She flushed, looking at him warily, ready for instant retreat if he showed the least sign of amusement; but McKean remained grave, staring back at her with a sort of startled alertness. "That is the reason why I think there is some Prussian influence behind the crime," she concluded.

"Because of the late revival of the story? Why, you told me it could be heard at any time."

"Yes," she retorted, "but not even my father had ever seen any one who had actually heard the wolf until after the first of last April."

"He did after that time?"

"Oh, yes, and so did I."

"Men who had heard it but had never seen it?"

"Well, there is one man—he was hook-tender at Camp Three. His name is Cotswold, but they call him the Timber Beast, and he has a little cabin of his own some distance from the camp. He not only heard it in July, but claims to have seen it as well."

"He actually saw it?"

"So he says, and he is considered reliable around the camps."

"He was in the timber at the time?"

"No; he saw it from the window of his shack one moonlight night. From his description it was a very powerful brute, built more like a big dog than a wolf. He saw it twice, and other times he heard it howl."

"He was not slow in telling his story; I judge."

"Oh, no, but there is nothing more to expect of such a man."

Her gray eyes turned black, and she drummed on the table with her gloved fingers.

"This man Cotswold had some trouble with your father?"

"He is a paid agitator of the I. W. W.'s," she replied. "He took all the men from Camp Three."

"You have just said that the trouble was not personal."

"Well, but the Timber Beast went a little farther. He stopped working at the camp—he seemed to have plenty of money—and went around encouraging the men to resist the draft, and—he wanted to marry me."

"Oh, and—"

"Please don't miss the point," she interrupted. "His being a hook-tender at the camp was not in the least against him. There was something else, of which I have only a hint; but my father knew. He flew into a violent rage, called the man a German spy, and threatened to shoot him if he ever laid eyes on him again."

"How do you know all this?"

"I came in from riding one day, and was about to enter my father's business room, when they began quarreling, and it was all over in a burst before I could close the door."

"This happened when?"

"In September. The Timber Beast is still at his cabin, but he always avoided my father after that."

"You do not suspect him?"

She stared at him with contempt and resentment.

"My father was a match for any two men in Kahlotus. Besides, the Timber Beast would have gone to no such trouble to cover his tracks. A shot through the window would have suited him, the way he's come to feel since he's joined the I. W. W.; and there is no death penalty in this State."

"Still, you have given me nothing that ties the crime up to German activity."

"I have only my hunch," she replied with a sort of patient sadness, as if she knew that the idea was absurd, and could not hope it to be otherwise, and yet remained convinced.

McKean met her gaze with a sudden burst of sympathy. The night before he had been baffled and beaten, yet *his* hunch that Mr. James Tussy was the much-sought representative of the German spy system was as fresh and strong as on the moment when he lounged into the lobby of the Portland Hotel and entered into casual conversation with the man.

"Miss Tolliver," he exclaimed impulsively, "let us play your hunch to the limit and see what we draw! This is war, and when war shakes the box no one knows what may rattle out. I'm sick of inactivity, anyway. Come here!" He beckoned her to the large-scale map on the wall. "Let me see." He ran his long, white finger along the Portland streets. "Here we are! White House Road—motor, is that the answer?"

"Yes," said Torry Tolliver.

"Oh, yes, here's the place—Kahlotus—and here's your father's house, the Big Cabin."

"Yes," said the girl again.

"H-m—here is Camp Three—Skedee—this is the trail—Kingfisher Crossing. What's this back here in the timber a mile or so to the right of Camp Three, in the direction of Kingfisher Crossing? Peace Cabin—whose place is that?"

"It is the house of the Timber Beast," Torry said. "It's a—well, it's a sort of a tourist place, where people come for hunting and fishing, and he guides them to all the good hunting-grounds in the mountains and the best trout-streams."

"He seems to be the nearest neighbor you have, except the postmaster at Kahlotus."

She nodded.

"Yes, he is."

"It must be a wild, lonely place," mused McKean, his long, white finger still busy on the map.

"Not lonely," interrupted the girl; "big and fertile and beautiful."

"Still, there is room for the Evil One in all that big timber!"

three hunches—that your father was murdered by a man, and not by a supernatural beast; that he was killed for some very important reason; that the reason is to be found in our war with Germany."

He glanced at her inquiringly, and she nodded.



"I HAVE BEEN ROBBED!"

"What?" she cried. "Are you going to turn me away by telling me you believe it was the Wolf of Kahlotus?"

"The devil's agents are not always specters, Miss Tolliver. Indeed, I think he finds the flesh and blood ones the most useful." McKean smiled a little. "Our business," he added, "as I see it, is to connect your

"Now tell me something more. Your father left Skedee at five. You have established that fact?"

She nodded again.

"He should have reached home at nine. You found his body at midnight four miles from the house. How long do you think he had been dead?"

"I—why, I don't know."

"It rained here last night," said McKean. "Did it rain up in the Kahlotus country?"

"Yes." She met his steely gaze, and her face went white. "It rained hard between eight and nine, but—my father's body was not wet."

"He stopped in some shack along the trail, perhaps?"

"There is no shack," she said in a slow whisper, as if to herself alone. "And if there was, what of it? We do not stop for rain here in western Oregon. We should stay home all the time if we did. What does that mean?"

"He must surely have gone in somewhere," persisted McKean.

"There was only one place for him to go," replied the girl.

She looked up at the map and put her finger upon Peace Cabin, the home of the Timber Beast.

"How far up the trail did you go after you found his body?" asked McKean.

"About half a mile. The two horses had come along side by side, single-footing it easily all the way."

"After the rain?" threw in McKean.

"It—why, yes, now that I think of it, yes."

"Then your father did not know he was pursued until he was caught."

"I think you are right. Just at the crossing his horse suddenly made three long jumps, reared, turned to the left, and ran. Oh, the poor thing!"

McKean turned back to his chair.

"I must think this thing over," he said.

"What are you going to do now, Miss Tolliver?"

"I am going across here to the Portland Hotel, to try to get a little sleep. I have been up all night, and I don't dare try to drive my car back to Big Cabin until I rest. My father will not be buried until noon to-morrow."

McKean turned over the scrap of cloth with the torn coronet, and his face was thoughtful.

"What was your father's name?"

"William Karl," she replied, and smiled faintly. "But he was never called anything else but Square Bill." With an easy, boyish gesture, she settled the little black hat on her head and took up her stick. "I would like to have that piece of cloth back, please."

"No, leave it with me."

She walked quickly to the door and turned.

"Are you going to send one of your men back with me?"

McKean lifted his steely eyes and clenched the green scrap tight in his fist.

"I am going myself," he said.

### III

NEXT morning McKean was just sitting down to breakfast when the bell of his bachelor apartment rang loudly, twice in rapid succession. He heard an exclamation from Dong, his Chinese houseboy, there was a quick flurry of skirts, and Torry Tolliver threw open the door of the dining-room.

"Mr. McKean!" She dispensed with all greeting. Her face was pale above her high collar, her eyes bright and determined. "I'll take you out with me to Big Cabin right now," she said.

McKean sprang up. He did not try to conceal his surprise.

"Come in!" he cried. "Let Dong give you some coffee. I want to go up there to the Kahlotus country—indeed, I *am* going, but I thought you would not care to have me go to-day."

"My father is dead," she replied slowly.

"I love him, and he will be laid beside my mother to-day with due ceremony; but the cause of his death exists, it is active, and—well, the harm intended extends beyond just me. I had breakfast in my room this morning, and this letter came up on my tray. The clerk told me it was in my box."

McKean took the envelope and turned it over carefully. It was long, made of smooth, white paper, with a two-cent stamp printed in one corner and a green penny stamp stuck crookedly beside it in obedience to the mandate of the war-tax for out-of-town mail. The address—"Miss Ettarre Tolliver, Portland Hotel, City"—was stragglingly printed with an indelible pencil. The postmark was Portland, in spite of the extra stamp, and it had been mailed at four thirty the afternoon before.

McKean lifted his long lashes suddenly, and his blue eyes raked her pale, determined face.

"Then you took some one besides myself into your confidence!" said he.

She flushed up hotly, but shook her head.

"I have spoken only to you. It is absurd to waste time on denials," she added.



THE GREAT ROCK DASHED INTO THE ROAD JUST BEHIND THE BACK WHEELS

impatiently. "Why, I told you the Indian wolf theory has been accepted in Kahlotus. It was thought that I came to town solely about the—the funeral."

"You said, probably, that you could be reached at the Portland Hotel?"

"I said nothing," she replied with emphasis. "I didn't even think about a hotel

until I looked out of your office window yesterday and realized how horribly tired I was."

"But you told them at the garage where you would be?"

"I had already left my car when I came to see you, and I have only just been to the garage and got it again."

"Well—h-m—some one, evidently, has undertaken to look after you!"

He drew out of the envelope a sheet of rough, yellowish paper, folded three times. He unfolded it and spread it out flat upon the table, among the breakfast-things. Straight across the middle crease ran a straggling procession of letters printed hard into the paper with an indelible pencil:

If you hope for life and happiness, do not go back to Kahlotus.

"Will you tell me," said the girl imperiously, "what it is possible to make of that?"

McKean folded the paper carefully and returned it to the envelope.

"Some one," he said slowly, "desires to save you from the wolf."

"My father never harmed the Indians," protested Torry earnestly. "If you believe in the wolf, you must believe it was a counterfeit that killed him; and for my part I feel that that counterfeit wears an identification-tag stamped on one side with the German eagle. Will you come with me, or shall I go alone?"

McKean regarded her in reluctant admiration.

"Miss Tolliver," he said, "have you always played your hunches so confidently?"

"It is a saying of my father's that life is ready to teach us what to touch and what to leave alone, if we only stop long enough to listen. I have never been in a hurry in my life, and I have always played my hunches to win."

McKean put the letter into his pocket and drank his coffee.

"It was the way you played them, perhaps," he said, setting down his cup. "Dong!"

The China boy appeared at the swing door from the pantry.

"Get me my bag, please. Now, Miss Tolliver, doesn't that hunch of yours tell you to try and find out where this letter came from? It was very obviously intended to be mailed from some other place than

Portland. Then the writer thought better of it, or followed you in person, it is hard to say which. And the paper!" He drew out the letter again. "It's copy paper, Miss Tolliver, the kind the newspaper reporters have their pockets full of. Have you a daily at Kahlotus?"

"We have," she replied—"a daily that comes from Portland twice a week. The nearest newspaper to Kahlotus is right here in this town. I never heard of a reporter up there, either."

"He makes a queer 'e,' that fellow," went on McKean, still studying the sheet. "Hello—wait! He wrote 'come,' and rubbed it out. No—yes, I'm sure!"

He drew a small magnifying-glass from his pocket.

"Yes," he said, peering down at the straggling line of print, "that's it! 'Come back to Kahlotus' has been turned into 'go back to Kahlotus,' and the 'e' on the end of 'hope' is different from any in the lot. Miss Tolliver, may I mention my hunch? I've a hunch that the first party to write this spelled 'hope' without any 'e,' and advised you not to come back to Kahlotus. Therefore he resides there. But the work was looked over by a second party who spelled better, and who concluded that 'come' might be too great a hint to you. And I'll go further than that. This letter was composed and corrected by two people who know you fairly well, and who were, apparently, moved by the same desire. That would indicate team-work back of the wolf—if this is to be connected with your father's death. And somehow I believe the one who made these corrections brought the letter to Portland before mailing it, for greater safety, or because they were trailing you. In which case, Miss Tolliver, we are aware of two things—you have been warned, and you are being watched."

"If that is so," answered Torry promptly, "we'd best get back to Kahlotus, because that is where one of the interested parties must be. Shall we go?"

"Wait a minute!" McKean took from his vest-pocket the scrap of green cloth with the torn coronet, and laid it down beside the letter. "I wish I knew where you came from," he said. "Miss Tolliver"—he glanced at her quizzically—"haven't you a hunch about this?"

"No," she replied seriously, "I have not, worse luck for us all. I know that if I

showed it the story of the wolf would be confirmed, because of the green uniform that Kahlotus had from his treacherous white friend, with a coat of arms worked in gold thread upon the sleeve. But, according to my way of thinking, Indian specters don't wear real clothes any more than ghost wolves can bite. I can tell you another thing, too—there is not another piece of cloth like that in this town. I looked that up thoroughly before I could see you. I had time."

McKean glanced up, conscience-stricken.

"Yes," he agreed. "Ten o'clock was a disgraceful hour for me to be coming down; but I had to see a man the night before, and he was out at a dinner-party or something, and didn't get in until eleven thirty, and then we talked until nearly morning."

The words brought back a vivid recollection of the bland, baffling Mr. James Tussy, with the tanned cheeks and white upper lip and selfish anxiety over the proper feeding of his dog, when half the children of Europe were starving.

"Never mind, old boy," thought McKean, "I'm not done with you yet. I've an awful strong hunch about that!"

He still had some questions to put to Torry Tolliver.

"Did you try for the gold thread, too?" he asked.

The girl nodded.

"Same thing—not a bit in town like it. The man at the St. John's Woolen Mill told me that he could swear the cloth was woven in Europe. And do you know what I did? I had such a strong hunch that the person who lost it would try and find it again that I bought a piece of cloth as near like it as I could. Yesterday, before I went to sleep, I worked a gold coronet on it, and tore out a three-cornered section that broke the coronet right in half."

McKean held out his hand.

"Let me see it."

"I left it up at the hotel," she said.

"You haven't given up your room there?"

"Why—no." She hesitated, as if surprised at his tone. "When I got this letter I hurried right out; but it won't take me a minute to gather up my things. Shall we go there?"

"Let's," said McKean. "I want to see the piece of cloth you fixed up. It's a clever idea, and may lead to something."

She turned without answering and led

the way to the street. McKean looked at the high-powered car drawn up at the curb, with the initials "E. T." on the door, and beneath them the word "Kahlotus."

"You're a celebrity!" he said.

She laughed with the frank unconsciousness that seemed part of her.

"How can I help being—in Kahlotus?" she asked a little sadly.

They swung smoothly along a cross street, down, and then up again. As they turned the last time, McKean caught a glimpse of a brown taxicab close behind. Torry slowed down for a crossing, the cab shot by, and a pair of eyes stared fixedly out of the little rear window. McKean jumped erect, glared, and then sank back into the luxurious upholstery in something like confusion.

"Confound this girl!" he thought. "She's too attractive. She'll have me hunch-crazy in no time. That is just some one looking at the car."

The cab fussed ahead for another block, and then, for no apparent reason, slowed down. The dark-green car with "E. T., Kahlotus," in plain dull-gold letters upon the door shot smoothly past and went under the porte-cochère of the Portland Hotel in the middle of the block.

"I'll be back in no time," said Torry. "It's a five-hour run out to Big Cabin, but I'll have to make it in four. Still, you'll have all the time you want to look at my counterfeit piece of cloth."

She ran up the steps and into the hotel.

As the door closed behind her, there was a noise at the cab-stand on the street. A brown taxicab was just backing in, and its number—2654—seemed, to McKean's stimulated imagination, to signal him like a human eye. He leaned out eagerly, and then, cursing his utter lack of caution, leaned back again and peered through the rear window of the car.

But in that time the occupant of the cab had become one of the passing crowd. He had gone down the street—that was evident from the way the chauffeur stood staring alternately in that direction and down at the open palm of his gloved hand.

"The tip," muttered McKean, "was either too big or too little—I don't need a hunch to tell me that; but I wish I knew which!"

The chauffeur ceased to stare, turned in from the street, and walked up under the porte-cochère.

"Beg pardon, sir," he said, touching his cap civilly. "Mr. McKean, I believe?"

"Yes."

McKean did not feel any great surprise. The war had been the means of making him pretty well known in Portland.

"The secretary told me to give you this," said the man, endeavoring to keep his grin respectful.

He held up a tiny replica of a Chinese pug—a lucky dog, such as can be purchased in any Chinese shop for ten cents.

"He said to tell you he said you'd need it," concluded the chauffeur.

"The secretary gave you this?" exclaimed McKean. "What secretary?"

"The Secretary of War, sir. He's been my fare for about an hour. Yeah, he came out of the hotel here and hailed me just an hour ago. He said you had a right to know who he was, and I could tell you, but not to spread it, for he was dodging the papers."

"Best not to, these times!" McKean took the toy and laughed shortly. "You're dead right," he added. "It doesn't do to talk too much. Much obliged! Glad the secretary thought of me, even if he didn't have time to stop."

The chauffeur touched his cap again and went back to his cab; but McKean sat in the car with clenched fists, and a slow tide of blood colored his thin cheeks.

"Of all the infernal impudence!" he muttered. "And yet, what a fool! There is something to this wolf business, and the fellow has given it away. He must know I'm trying to uncover it. But how can he, at that?" He looked down at the little lucky dog in his hand. "Secretary of War, and I'll need it! Curse Tussy—why can't I get him out of my head? I'm going to run down this business in Kahlotus first, though, and by that time the bland rascal may be a little off his guard. I *know* he's the chap I've been told to get! I'll prove it, too, or—"

A bell-girl jerked open the door of the hotel and ran down the steps.

"Mr. McKean? Miss Tolliver, in 347, says will you please come up there immediately."

The door of the room was wide open, and McKean walked in. Torry Tolliver stood in the center of the floor, her hat and coat tossed tumultuously upon the bed, her pale, shining brown hair loosened about her face. She looked less self-possessed and much younger.

"I have been robbed!" she cried. "This room has been entered while I was gone. The few things I brought with me have all been turned upside down, and they have stolen—oh!" She threw out her hands in a gesture both humorous and tragic. "I don't know whether to laugh or have hysterics. They have stolen my counterfeit scrap of green cloth!"

"The devil!" cried McKean.

"You see," she pointed out, "they were hurried, and took it for the real thing."

McKean walked to the bed and lifted the heavy coat.

"Miss Tolliver," he said rapidly, "I've a hunch that you're safe for only just so long as they think they've got the real thing. Put on your hat, and cram your things into your bag."

He told of the incident of the lucky dog as she obeyed him.

"The fellow was cheeky because they'd got that scrap of cloth," he went on. "If we're let alone for any length of time, it will prove that the head of this business is not in town, and they have sent the cloth to him for identification. If they come after us pretty quick, then the head's within easy call. The place for us is Kahlotus before that head is reached, be it near or far. Come!"

#### IV

THE farther they left Portland behind, the more Torry increased the speed of the car.

"No fear of anything going wrong with the works now," she said. "Since we haven't broken down yet, it's all right to Big Cabin."

To McKean it was her own courage and cheerfulness that lifted the swift, smooth-running motor up and down hills, across fertile, river-threaded valleys, thundering over bridges that her father had built, rounding corners made safe by his wise generosity.

"He was a citizen worth having, and now, at the time when he is most needed, he has been taken away," thought McKean. "You are not alone in the house?" he abruptly demanded of Torry.

"Oh, no," the girl replied. "Mrs. Barry is there—has been there for years. She is a sort of a housekeeper and general factotum. Then there's a Chinese cook, Yip. He does not count except that he's awfully scared now."

"Afraid of the wolf?"

"That's it."

The car slid down into a gorge filled with the roaring of a waterfall that covered the road with spray.

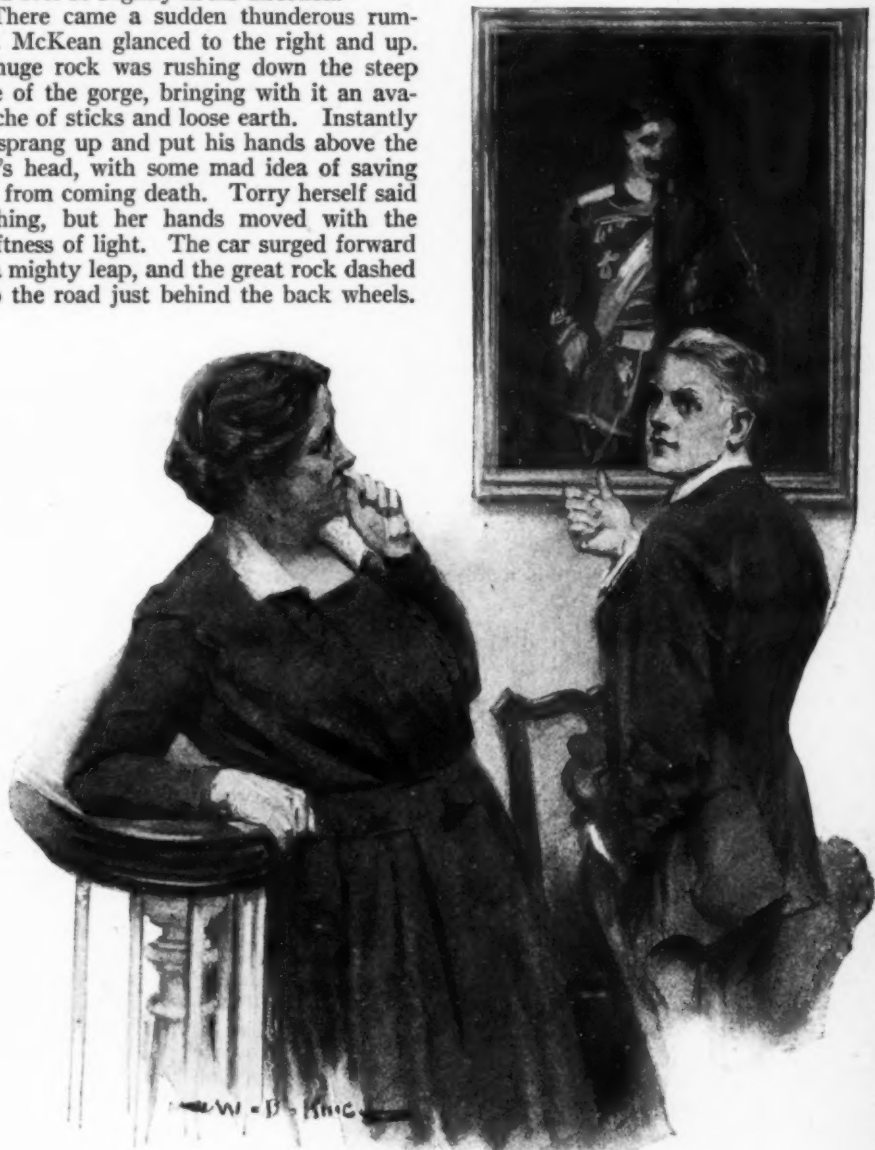
"This Mrs. Barry—" McKean hesitated. "You are sure of her?"

"Oh, yes," Torry replied, turning her head ever so slightly in his direction.

There came a sudden thunderous rumble. McKean glanced to the right and up. A huge rock was rushing down the steep side of the gorge, bringing with it an avalanche of sticks and loose earth. Instantly he sprang up and put his hands above the girl's head, with some mad idea of saving her from coming death. Torry herself said nothing, but her hands moved with the swiftness of light. The car surged forward in a mighty leap, and the great rock dashed into the road just behind the back wheels.

"Mr. McKean," she said quietly, "the leader of your party is close at hand. They know they've been fooled on that piece of cloth!"

"Nonsense!" stammered McKean. He was by far the more upset of the two. "That was an accident. Rocks often fall in this country when it rains."



"HAVE YOU SEEN HIM LATELY?"

"It was intended to be an accident," replied the girl, with set lips; "but it wasn't. Never mind," she added, seeing him about to speak. "Let it go for what you think it. About Mrs. Barry. She—you know, she's been there ever since I was a little girl. Her husband is foreman of the wheat-ranch. They have only one son," she concluded, as if to herself.

"And he is in France or a training-camp?"

"No, he is not," she said. "Dan Barry had to go to South America just after the draft law was passed, and he has not come back yet."

"You mean he ran away?"

"Oh, no. He has been attending to some very particular business, his mother says, and can't leave yet—that's all. She misses him, of course, and what's ahead for them all keeps her not very cheerful."

"Was your father consulted about sending him on this business?"

"No, indeed. It was some family affair. There was a little trouble between Mrs. Barry and her husband about it, but it was all very private, and my father counted it none of his business."

"I see," assented McKean. "Was this young Barry tied in with the I. W. W.'s in any way?"

"Why, not that I know of. He may have been, of course, but I don't think so. The only possible reason for thinking so would be that he used to go up to Peace Cabin and help guide hunting-parties."

"What sort of men came there to go hunting? Were they men that your father knew?"

"Oh, he used to meet them sometimes. They were mostly city men—clubmen, hunting and fishing from pure idleness. Dan Barry is a fine boy. My father had a great interest in him, and made some provision for him in his will. He was not so very keen to have him hanging about Peace Cabin, though."

"You say he made some provision for him in his will?"

"Yes."

"And did Dan Barry know it?"

"Yes, indeed."

"And Dan Barry has remained in South America—at least his parents say so. That's interesting!"

"Wait a minute, Mr. McKean. I inherited the main portion of my father's property, and I found his body."

"Who else is concerned besides your brothers and yourself?"

"Oh, there are a few unimportant legacies—nothing much."

"What is the amount of the portion left to you and your brothers?"

"About three millions for me and a million and a half for each of them."

"Good Lord!" exclaimed McKean.

"That is a sum worth fighting for."

"My father was very successful, and everything he touched seemed to turn into money. He had big interests in shipping, as well as in sheep and cattle and lumber. I say about six millions—his interests are probably worth more than that."

"Look here, Miss Tolliver—in case of your brothers not returning from France and an accident happening to you, who would inherit all this money?"

She favored him with a fleeting glance of scorn.

"You persist in believing that this is some scheme for private gain. I am so sorry that you are going to be disappointed. The property would go to my father's distant cousin, Dr. Karl Hundberg, a funny, studious old professor tucked away somewhere in Boston."

"Is he German?"

McKean's voice was incredulous.

"Past tense, Mr. McKean, past tense! That kind and intelligent gentleman takes more interest in dried botanical specimens than in anything else, though he has the kindest heart in the world. He is not at all likely to be plotting against us—or the government either, for that matter."

"And this old boy would inherit all these millions?"

"The whole works." She sent the car shooting up a long hill through a magnificent stand of Douglas fir. "But poor old cousin professor is out of the question, Mr. McKean. It is pure libel to speak of him in connection with what has happened. It would be impossible to think of him plotting against the land of his adoption and his nearest relative in it." The car reached the top of the hill and shot away on the smooth, level road. "No, no!" said the girl. "I agree with you that it's German business; but not cousin professor's."

McKean leaned back in silence and watched her lovely, earnest profile. She drove that car like a fiend, he reflected. He saw that a clearing lay beyond the timber, and wondered if they were near their

journey's end. Then through the trees to his right he heard a sound—a deep, long-drawn howl.

Instantly the car stopped, and Torry held up her hand.

"Did you hear that?" she cried.

McKean leaned forward in his seat. He felt a thrill of premonition, and a nervousness of which he was almost ashamed. He had come to Kahlotus, and here was the wolf!

The car stood motionless. The great, brown-stemmed trees crowded all about in the brooding, listening stillness that dwells in the big timber. Torry Tolliver's eyes, large and dark with tragic grief, were bent upon him, and up through the green twilight of the forest drifted that menacing, long-drawn cry.

"That is a wolf, Miss Tolliver," McKean whispered.

"No such wolf as that in this timber," she replied shortly. "I was raised here, and I know."

He pointed in the direction of the sound.

"What lies over there?"

"As the crow flies? Peace Cabin."

"Is that so?" commented McKean.

She looked at him almost with contempt.

"It is also the general direction of the trail to Skedee," she said dryly.

This time McKean did not reply. They waited, but the sound was not repeated, and Torry sent the car shooting on. The road turned out of the timber on a high bluff above a river. There was a log-dump on the opposite side, and the water was full of rafts of great brown logs waiting for a tow. Valley and upland, green, rolling wheat and deeper green timber—the country spread wide on both hands away to the snow-covered hills cut sharp as cardboard against the sky.

"This is Kahlotus," said Torry Tolliver.

"How much?" queried McKean.

"Just about all that you can see."

The car shot down the winding road, drawing swiftly nearer to the river. On the right hand the timber marched with them. On the left McKean saw orchards, paddocks, comfortable barns, gardens neatly snug for winter; and then a broad, low, red house set in a noble grove of fir-trees, with the river shining white between their brown stems. The grounds were filled with automobiles, saddle-horses, and spring wagons. Men stood in groups or strolled idly to and fro.

"Here is Big Cabin," said Torry. Her voice was hard and dry. "We are not too late, after all." She swung the car in between two giant gate-posts, uttered a sharp exclamation, and stopped it short. "Look at that!" she cried. "They are here before us. Will you play my hunch straight now?"

Stuck fast against the gate-post with a thumb-tack was a three-cornered scrap of green cloth torn straight through a coronet worked in gold thread.

Defly Torry backed the car, swung it closer, and snatched the thing down.

"It is my counterfeit," she said. "How sure they are, and how contemptuous of what we can do, to return it that way! Prussian methods, Mr. McKean. There is a wolf, but a German one!"

"You have no proof," he answered sharply. He remembered again the long telegram from Washington and his humiliating experience with Mr. James Tussy. The girl would have to learn by experience, too.

"Yes, I have only my hunch," she replied, and put out a lovely, determined under lip. "And I am going to play that to win for my father and my country. Come!"

He followed her across the broad hall to a crowded room where a minister from Skedee was already beginning to read the uplifting, tremendous words of the service for the burial of the dead.

## V

McKEAN stood bareheaded near the open grave and studied the serious faces about him. The group was composed mainly of men in Tolliver's employ, with their wives and daughters. It included almost all the people of Kahlotus, for the dead man's wide activities were the mainstay of the whole district; but there were not many men under forty.

"War," thought McKean; "war and the I. W. W."

There was one who stood slightly apart from the rest. He was younger—of draft age, or only slightly past. His head was erect, and he held his hat in his hand. There was a certain defiance in his bearing, too, as if he knew that he transgressed the conventions by being there, and yet proposed to remain.

McKean was struck by the wonderful vitality of his thin, clean-shaven face and

tall, alert figure, and the wild, free carriage of his close-cropped black head. Once he looked down at his hands, which held too tightly a soft black felt hat. McKean made a specialty of hands. He remembered them, and identified their owners, when names and faces completely escaped him.

The hands of this man were long and thin, like his face, full of nervous energy and physical strength. McKean thought of the hands of Mr. James Tussy, as they had gracefully handled his cigar—heavy and white, with broad, cushioned fingers—feline in movement, with a suggestion of cruelty sleepy and well-masked; and at the bottom of the index-finger on the left hand a round brown mole—a curious blemish on Tussy's soft, well-kept white skin.

McKean sighed impatiently. Curse Mr. James Tussy!

He met the fiery black eyes of the man he had been covertly studying, and the fellow stared back at him with a queer trick of alertness, as if listening to his thoughts. The illusion impressed itself on McKean so vividly that he started forward in spite of himself. Instantly the man turned away; for the funeral of Square Bill Tolliver, the great man of Kahlotus, was at an end.

McKean did not try to speak to Torry. He strolled about unobtrusively as the crowd dispersed. Some of the people went into the house to eat. It was afternoon, and they had come a long way. Others bade the girl a quiet good-by and went off on horseback, by motor, or by wagon on the trail or the road.

McKean marked where a broad trail wound off from the grounds; and when the man whom he had studied beside the grave swung off along it with the swift, easy stride of a dweller in the big timber, he followed. The trail was hard-surfaced and evidently much traveled. McKean loafed until the man ahead of him was out of sight, then he quickened his pace.

"Some trail-builder, this Tolliver!" he muttered.

His eye caught a sign with a finger pointing and an inscription—"Skedee, 25 miles." This was the trail, then, upon which the wolf had come, the way the girl had ridden at midnight to look for her father and bring his body home. McKean stared up at the sign thoughtfully, his long eyelashes softening the keen glitter of his blue eyes.

She had found him at Kingfisher Crossing. That was four miles away. His throat was torn open, and his horse was eaten, and she had a hunch—that three-cornered scrap of cloth. He thought of a hunch of his own—of that inquiry from Washington, and his fool attempt to connect it with Mr. James Tussy. He gathered his wits together and started briskly down the trail.

How far, now, was the way hard-surfaced? If all the way, Torry's own story would not hang together. He decided to walk to Kingfisher Crossing, which, from the dead man's evident pleasure in order, would no doubt be indicated by a proper sign-post. A hundred yards, and the hard surface gave place to gravel. Another hundred yards, and he stepped upon the hard-packed volcanic ash of the big timber. So the girl's story was all right, after all!

McKean lengthened his stride. Fresh in the trail ahead of him he could see the track of the man who had walked away from him fifteen minutes before.

"I wonder where you turn off, my friend!" he muttered.

Straight through the timber he followed the trail. The brooding silence shut him in, and the thick, tasseled branches overhead blotted out the sky. He thought of the girl bringing home the mangled body of her father through that stillness, deepened intolerably by the silence of midnight. It seemed a feat of courage too great to contemplate.

Perhaps she had not really done so. After all, he had only her word for it. He had come with her and seen her father buried, but no one had confirmed the wild story of Tolliver's death.

McKean decided to talk to some of the Kahlotus people when he got back to the house. In the mean time a visit to the place where Tolliver was said to have fallen, and a careful survey of the spot, would not be a bad idea.

He walked on rapidly, and presently he saw, by the brightness through the trees, that he was approaching a homestead or a burn in the timber. All the time the tracks of the man who had watched him at the funeral went on ahead. The trees began to thin out. He came to a cleared space where another trail, the exact counterpart of the one he traveled, cut across it from left to right and vanished again into the big timber. And there was the sign that the

one at Big Cabin had led him to expect—"Kingfisher Crossing—Skedee 21 miles, Deep Creek 15 miles."

McKean halted and stared about him. It was here that Torry Tolliver claimed to have found the dead body of her father, with the scrap of green cloth and the torn gold coronet clutched tight in his hand. It was down that straight trail where the hand pointed—"Deep Creek 15 miles"—that the horse had dashed, pursued by death. The girl had deduced a great part of her story from the tracks about the place where she said her father fell. McKean stared at the ground before him in foolish astonishment. There were no signs of struggle—no tracks, even. The ground had been raked smooth and swept with fir-branches.

McKean caught his lower lip between his teeth. All his doubts as to Torry's story vanished.

"Who knew I was coming here?" he muttered.

And then he saw the man who left Big Cabin ahead of him standing in the middle of the trail to Skedee. The fellow could not possibly have got there without crossing the smoothly brushed square of ground at the intersection of the two trails; and yet there was no track.

"What would he want to walk around it for?" thought McKean. "No sense in that, pardner! I've a hunch there's a fir-branch around here somewhere, and it's on your side of the square."

He raised his hand in a gesture of salute and good-fellowship.

"Good evening!" he called.

The man made no reply, but continued to stare sullenly.

"Bully good trails you have in this country," went on McKean. "This crossing here is lovely enough to be a section of God's own little garden."

Suddenly the man took a long step in his direction.

"I know well enough who you are, Mr. District Attorney McKean," he said with the coolest defiance. "What do you want with me?"

"Why—not a thing," said McKean pleasantly. "Not a blamed thing. I was looking for the caretaker of these trails. If you could direct me, now—"

"Go back to Big Cabin for your information!" cried the man. "Then beat it for Portland, if you care to keep on living. There are wolves in this timber!"

He turned as he spoke, and disappeared almost immediately among the great brown stems of the trees.

McKean fairly ran across the intersection of the two trails straight to where the man had been standing. Just to the side lay a large fir-bough, with particles of earth still adhering to the short, thick needles, which had been bruised and soiled by rough usage, and which sent up a strong, aromatic fragrance.

McKean stared at it as if scarcely daring to trust his eyes, then stooped and moved it from where it lay. He saw that the earth about him, and beyond in the direction of Skedee, was cut up by the passage of two horses traveling easily side by side in the direction of Big Cabin.

"Some efficiency!" he muttered. "Miss Torry, you're right, and I'm a fool if I don't play *your* hunch to the limit!"

## VI

HE walked rapidly back in the direction of Big Cabin. For the life of him he could not help glancing uneasily from side to side, and occasionally behind.

"It's this big timber," he said aloud. "It gets on my nerves!"

He felt oddly relieved when he emerged from the timber into the handsome, well-cared-for grounds.

All the saddle-horses, motors, and wagons were gone. A late afternoon quiet lay over the whole place, and it looked deserted. Only where the bluff fell away to the river the long mound of new earth, watched over by the great trees, showed as a mute reminder of the tragedy that had been enacted.

A fire was burning in the fireplace on the wide veranda, and a woman seated before it was busily knitting socks. She raised her head when McKean came up the steps. Her black hair, parted in the middle and drawn snugly back, was thickly shot with gray. Her face was pleasant, rather weak, sad, and deeply lined with care. She laid aside her work on a table at her elbow and came forward.

"I reckon you are Mr. McKean," she said pleasantly.

She met his eyes, and the district attorney saw with astonishment that she was frightened.

"And you are Mrs. Barry," he answered, and held out his hand. "What can it be that's wrong with you?" he thought.

"Torry told me to watch for you," Mrs. Barry went on in the same cordial way. "She is resting now, poor thing. Will you have some lunch out here beside the fire?"

"I'd love to," said McKean, "if you will keep me company."

"Surely, surely!" She smiled, but he felt that she was most unwilling. She lifted the top from a Dutch oven beside the fire. "It's waiting for you here." She drew a chair to the table, set the hot food upon it, and resumed her seat. "My husband will be back later," she said. "We are living in the house now."

"You have lived here a long time?" began McKean, seeking to reassure her by devoting most of his attention to the food.

"Oh, yes, since my—since they were all little children."

"You must miss the two Tollivers who have gone to France."

"Sir!" Mrs. Barry started violently and flushed. "Torry's brothers? Oh, indeed, we all do."

"Now, what in the world did you think I said?" mused McKean. "Have they been gone some time?" he inquired.

"The boys? Oh, yes." Her hands trembled as she turned over the sock she was knitting. "Some three months or more. It's hard for Torry to be alone now."

"Were you here, Mrs. Barry, when she brought her father's body home?"

"Was I here?" she repeated tartly. "Why, yes! Where should I be?" Then she glanced swiftly at McKean, as if alarmed at her own display of feeling. "I beg your pardon," she said almost humbly; "but I am always here, you know. It sounds strange for any one to ask if I was here."

"Of course," he agreed pleasantly. "I am a stranger, and you must forgive me. What is the theory of Mr. Tolliver's death here in Kahlotus?"

"Do you know about the wolf, Mr. McKean?"

She leaned forward in her chair and regarded him watchfully.

"The Wolf of Kahlotus?" McKean pushed back the little table and prepared to smoke. "Well, yes," he said, making good play with his eyelashes. "I have heard—well, I can scarcely believe in ghosts, Mrs. Barry. Do you?"

"Live in the big timber a little longer," she replied, "before you go talking like that!"

"Then you think it was Kahlotus's wolf that killed Mr. Tolliver?"

She leaned toward him impulsively, as if about to speak. Then she seemed to reconsider, and straightened up again.

"I don't know what to think," she said; "but that is the general belief in this country."

"I see!" He drew his chair around and stared into the fire. "Do you go around much in the timber, Mrs. Barry?"

Again the woman started, and McKean felt her eyes upon him, though he continued to gaze into the fire.

"I?" she said with a sort of breathless calm. "No, I never go into the brush. I'm afraid of the big timber. That's why I'm glad we're going away."

"Going away?" exclaimed McKean, looking at her in genuine surprise. "You don't mean you are leaving Miss Tolliver?"

"I—no—yes—that is," Mrs. Barry replied confusedly, "my husband has had such an excellent offer in South America that I hardly feel we can afford to refuse."

"Oh, South America!" McKean struck another match. "That is where your son is, I believe?"

Night had come on as they sat there, the early darkness of late autumn in the big timber. The flames leaped in the broad throat of the chimney, and by their light Mrs. Barry still plied her needles. When McKean spoke, she stopped knitting entirely, raised her head with a stern rigidity, and faced him, very white and still.

"Yes," she said, as if repeating a lesson learned by hard and earnest study. "Yes, my son is in South America."

"You must miss him."

McKean drew comfortably on his pipe, and threw the match into the fire.

"I do," she replied in the same slow, calculated way.

There was a pause, and she resumed her work, the steel needles flashing red in the firelight.

For some time they sat silent. Then McKean spoke again.

"Anybody about here dodge registration, Mrs. Barry?"

"I have heard no talk of it."

"Would Mr. Tolliver have gone out after such men?"

"I am sure he would have, sir."

"Perhaps he made some enemies, then?"

"There was no one for him to quarrel with on that score," she replied sharply.

"You are determined to make me think it was the wolf," he said.

"No man in this whole country would have raised his hand against Mr. Tolliver, Mr. McKean. Even the labor agitators respected him."

"What of this man Cotswold—the one you call the Timber Beast?"

"You know him, do you?" she retorted quickly.

"Not yet," answered McKean; "but I know that he was at outs with Mr. Tolliver."

"Well, he wanted to marry Torry. Not that he isn't good-looking enough—don't you think so?"

"I? Why, I've never seen the fellow."

"I saw you looking at him out at the grave this afternoon."

"You mean that tall man with his hat in his hand and his head up? Was *that* the Timber Beast?"

Mrs. Barry nodded.

"I—see," said McKean very slowly, staring deep into the fire. "You were looking at me, were you?" he thought.

He felt her eyes upon him in sharp scrutiny, but did not move.

"Well, perhaps I'll see him again," he said presently. He sat up and yawned prodigiously. "Mrs. Barry, please show me where I can go to bed. I know I can't see Miss Tolliver before to-morrow, and in the mean time I could do with about ten tons of sleep."

"Why, of course."

She rose, putting aside her work, and McKean followed her into the wide, dim-lit hallway.

It rather startled him to see the rich interior furnishings, rare rugs, old ivories, first editions, and pictures. On one side of the hall hung a dashing half-length portrait of a young German officer in all the glory of full-dress uniform. He had the good looks of youth and health, but underlying it all was a cold, subtle cruelty which the artist had perhaps caught unconsciously, and which reminded McKean, in some inexplicable way, of the thick, slow, white hands of Mr. James Tussy.

"Who is that?" he exclaimed with a gesture of quick distaste.

"That," repeated Mrs. Barry, "is Captain Vrang, nephew of Professor Hundberg. There is the professor over there."

She pointed over beside the living-room door, where hung a very noble, intelligent

head of an old man. The forehead was wide and benevolent. The determined chin redeemed the face from intellectual weakness. The mouth, from which the gray mustache had been carefully clipped, was slightly sensual and full of humor.

"Miss Tolliver told me he was about the only relative her father had left," said McKean, looking up at the picture with interest. "Failing her brothers and herself, this man would be his heir. What about this Captain Vrang?"

"He is the nephew of the professor's wife," explained Mrs. Barry. "The old gentleman's mortal fond of him, and sent his picture here."

"He is in Germany now, I suppose?"

"I suppose so," echoed Mrs. Barry. "Or in France. That's where most of Germany's men are nowadays."

"Have you seen him lately?"

"Seen whom?" She started violently, and stood there staring at McKean, her hand on the newel-post of the stairs. "Seen whom?"

"This Captain Vrang."

"Him? Lord, no! He was here once, years ago, and looked mighty like that picture. I'd know him anywhere, the hateful German!"

"I wonder if you would!" said McKean thoughtfully. "He resembles some one I've seen, but I can't remember who it is. Do you hate the Germans?"

He began to follow her up the wide, uncarpeted stairway.

"Why shouldn't I?" she demanded with great bitterness. "Didn't they begin the war?"

She led him into a large, square room with a mahogany four-poster bed and a fireplace in which a fire was burning. An open door led to a white-tiled bath-room that gave back a red glow to the dancing light of the fire. McKean sighed loudly.

"Lord, how comfortable!" he cried.

"That's what Mr. Tolliver used to say when he came home after a long day," said Mrs. Barry, smiling faintly. "Breakfast is at seven o'clock in this house." Her hand was upon the door, but she halted. "You have come here to inquire into the cause of Mr. Tolliver's death?" she said abruptly.

"Just that," returned McKean. "Sorry I didn't see your husband to-night, but to-morrow will do. Good night!"

"Good night."

She closed the door, and very soon her quick, light footfall died away down the hall. Somewhere in the house a door opened and shut, and there was silence.

"I wonder what you thought I had come for!" said McKean.

He went to the window and opened it wide. It looked out upon the grounds, away from the timber, with a glimpse of the log-slide, the great brown rafts waiting in the river, and the rolling wheat-lands beyond. The giant firs about the house sighed softly, as if sorrowing for the last home-coming of Square Bill Tolliver, and for the procession that had passed that afternoon beneath their short, thick branches.

For a second McKean stood there, too tired to think. What would be the end of this war? Whither was the world going? And what power for evil lurked out there in that vast, brooding stillness among those great trees?

As if in answer to his question, faint and far away, like the echo of an echo, came a long-drawn, wailing cry. McKean leaned far out on the window-sill and listened acutely. The cry did not come again; but it was the same that he had heard on the road that day, and Torry Tolliver had said it was not the cry of a wolf.

Weary of speculation, he lay down in the bed; but, tired as he was, he could not sleep. Intermittently he listened for a repetition of the cry in the big timber, but it never came. Far down in the house he heard a clock chime the quarters and solemnly strike the hours. Once a horse neighed, and, after a long interval, another answered.

McKean began to feel relaxed and drowsy. He knew that sleep was coming; and then he heard another sound, too clear and unmistakable to have to be repeated. It was the outcry of a woman—the hard, bitter sob of one whose pain was too great to be controlled.

McKean sprang up and listened intently. Was it Torry Tolliver, deprived of her father, her brothers, and her lover, weeping in all the misery of her heavy grief?

Instantly he put away the thought. She was far too brave for that. Who, then, in that house had cause for such sorrow as was indicated by the single agonized outcry that he had heard?

For nearly an hour he waited, every nerve stretched. There came no other sound but

the sighing of the firs outside the window and the snapping of the fire he had built up on the hearth.

## VII

NEXT morning the sky was clear. Only a few wisps of mist hung like the shreds of a torn banner here and there across the forest-clad hills. The sun struck through the open window to the bed where McKean lay. He started up to the realization that he had overslept, and to the full beauty of an autumn day in the big timber.

As he hurried down-stairs, the warm light flooded the house, pouring like golden rain against the portrait of Captain Vrang in the hall, lighting to greater benevolence the broad brow of the professor opposite, catching the rainbows imprisoned in the cut glass on the sideboard, and flashing whitely from the silver on the breakfast-table. Insensibly McKean's spirits lightened. He took himself to task for his gloomy thoughts of the night before.

"I was tired," he thought, "upset by my failure to locate the man I suspected to be James Tussy, worried by this tragedy, with all its vague suggestions that don't lead anywhere. But still—"

He walked into the dining-room, where Torry sat behind a beautiful old coffee-urn of beaten silver.

"I hope I am not late, Miss Tolliver!" he exclaimed.

"No, indeed! Sit down." She looked pale but serene, and was dressed for riding. The sunlight started ruddy glints in her smooth, shining hair, and they somehow found a reflection in her eyes. "I was sorry to desert you yesterday," she added, handing him his coffee.

"I tried not to miss you," he said. "I had a walk to Kingfisher Crossing and saw the Timber Beast."

"He was here," she told him, a faint color dyeing her cheeks.

"And he went away on the trail to Skedee," pursued McKean. "He hardly looks as if his home should be called 'Peace.' But is that the way to the serene spot?"

"Why, no—at least, not the shortest. Still, that is a rough way through the timber. He might easily choose the Skedee trail."

"And then I came back," McKean went on smoothly, "and Mrs. Barry took excellent care of me until I went to bed and had a bad dream."

"Oh, Mr. McKean, I am so sorry! Your first night here, and you came solely because of my hunch! Perhaps it wasn't a dream, though. Some sound may have disturbed you."

"Well, I thought it was a sound." McKean regarded her gravely. "I thought I heard a woman weeping. I would rather think it was a dream."

"A woman weeping?" She stared at him, startled. "Why, I—I thought I heard the same thing." It was odd that they both ignored the possibility of it having been Torry herself. "I went to bed early. My father always said it was your duty to keep yourself fit when there was work to do. I was sound asleep when some one crying woke me up. Of course, I had to allow for dreams, but I had a hunch it was real. I waited a long time, and the sound did not come again."

"No," agreed McKean, "it did not. I waited until nearly day. Still, it was a woman crying, I am convinced."

"We'll do a little investigating."

Torry pressed a button in the side of the table, and a sleepy, white-clad Chinaman opened the swing door at her back.

"Yip, see where Mrs. Barry is, will you? And if she is not too busy, ask her to come here."

The Chinaman slid noiselessly back, and the door swung to.

"Let's eat," added Torry. "I want you to go down to Kingfisher Crossing with me without any more delay."

"I hardly think it is worth while for me to go down there again." McKean leaned forward and regarded her gravely. "There is no sign of a struggle there, Miss Tolliver. The ground is as smooth and neat as this beautifully waxed table."

"Wha-at?" She gazed at him in a sort of horrified fascination which swept away any vestige of doubt as to her sincerity that might have remained in his mind. "You—you can't mean that!"

She sank back in her chair, and her head drooped.

Mrs. Barry opened the swing door from the pantry and came to the back of Torry's chair. The woman's pleasant, weak face was paler than on the night before, and set in stern, unfamiliar lines. Her eyes were red, and she glanced at McKean somewhat furtively from beneath swollen, purple lids. He knew that it was she who had wept, and that she would deny it.

Torry did not look up. She seemed stunned by McKean's last speech. Mrs. Barry touched her shoulder.

"Did you send for me?" she said.

"Why, yes, Mrs. Barry, dear." Torry sat up again. "Did you hear a woman crying at midnight?"

"There were only you and I in the house, child," Mrs. Barry answered somewhat sharply; "and we are not that kind—even now—are we?"

"No," said Torry in a low tone. "Not even now. It must have been a bad dream."

She looked across at McKean as if seeking confirmation, but he made no reply. There was silence until Mrs. Barry leaned forward and moved the bowl of flowers in the center of the table.

"Wonder why Yip always sets that crooked?" she commented.

As if released by the trivial speech and action, Torry arose.

"I am going to ride to Kingfisher Crossing," she said, with a slight emphasis on the personal pronoun.

Mrs. Barry looked at her in quick surprise, and then glanced sidewise at McKean, as if hoping to study his face unnoticed.

"I would like to go, too," he said, ignoring the housekeeper.

"Let's get away, then," Torry replied over her shoulder, on her way to the hall.

McKean was about to follow when Mrs. Barry spoke.

"Mr. McKean"—her tone was low and guarded—"don't let her go anywhere by herself, and—persuade her to go away from here, Mr. McKean!"

"Do you know that there is danger to her here?"

The woman recoiled a little before the directness of the question and his glance.

"I don't *know* anything," she replied, almost sulkily, "except that a very terrible death came to Mr. Tolliver, and—I am afraid of the big timber!"

"You mean the story of the wolf?"

"I mean it is not good for her to stay here—nor for you, either," she ended defiantly; and, taking up a dish in her hands, she went back through the swing door.

"Waiting, Mr. McKean!" called Torry from the hall.

McKean hastened out, and they rode away on the trail to Skedee. It was a very silent ride to Kingfisher Crossing, and a

sorrowful one for the girl who had last covered the ground on foot at midnight, with the mangled body of her father slung across the saddle in which she now sat. McKean looked at her more than once; but her still, grave face and steadfast glance ahead told him nothing of her thoughts.

No one had passed on either trail since McKean's visit the evening before. Only his footmark marred the smoothed surface of the forest soil. He dismounted and fitted his shoe into it, looking up at the girl, silently calling her to witness the truth of what he had said.

"Miss Tolliver," he exclaimed suddenly, "I've an idea we can't work on this thing together!"

"You mean—" she said, and stopped. "You mean," she repeated, "that you're going to give it up?"

"I mean that there's a lot more in it than meets the eye," replied McKean impatiently. "There's organization here—highly efficient—and, you're right, that may mean enemies—our country's enemies; but, so far, we haven't dug up anything but loose ends. Your father's death was a loose end. I tell you I know it was!" he insisted, in response to a grave shake of her head. "I know all about loose ends. I was playing with one when you came to town."

He smiled a little ruefully as he thought of James Tussy.

"Now," he went on, "I want you to go home. I don't think I need be anxious for you at this time of day. I am going to ride the trail as far as Skedee. Keep a sharp lookout, and—oh, yes—did you ever

hear that sound in the daytime before? I mean the one we heard yesterday."

"No," she said slowly. "No, I never did; but I know people who claim to have heard it when some one had called the wolf before, and there was still work for it to do. If you are thinking of going to Skedee to find a dog that will fit," she added, "you might as well save yourself the trouble. There are no dogs up there but colliers, tried, true, and useful."

"Have you ever heard the wolves howl in here?"

"There have been three hard winters when the timber-wolves were pretty bad."

"Never this early?"

She shook her head. McKean swung himself into his saddle.

"Good-by," he said. "Back you go! You trust Mrs. Barry?"

Torry opened her gray eyes very wide.

"Well—yes. Why not?"

"That's a good answer!"

He gave her the full benefit of his lashes, shot her a keen, smiling glance, and rode away. He saw that the fir-bough had been removed from where it had lain the afternoon before.

"You did that too late!" he muttered.

He fell to wishing that the enemy's head would show somewhere. He was not adept at fighting in the dark; neither, as it seemed to him, was Torry Tolliver. It was rather superb that she did not even mention calling upon her brothers nor her lover—all fighting for their country—for aid. And she had ignored the sheriff, playing her hunch that the thing was too big and too important for him to handle.

*(To be continued in the March number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)*

### THE SERVICE PIN

HATS off to the band of women brave  
Whose lips were gay when their hearts were grave,  
Who gave their best to a field afar,  
And whose badge is the pin with the azure star!

They are old and young, they are plain and fair,  
But their thoughts alike have been "over there";  
With the same prayer each has done her part,  
And the same pride thrills each loyal heart.

They are sisters in faith that right is strong;  
They are sisters in hope for the end of wrong;  
They are sisters in love—aye, close of kin  
Are the women who wear the service pin!

*Leslie Davis*

# Our Navy After the War

AMERICA'S NAVAL FORCES COME OUT OF THE CONFLICT WITH ADDED PRESTIGE  
AND GREATLY INCREASED STRENGTH—THE PROGRAM FOR  
THEIR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

By Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy of the United States

THE very phrase "the navy of the United States" has to-day a new significance. It means not only ships and crews, not only matériel and personnel—it connotes a spirit, invisible but potent, a spirit that has enriched our national life, that has vitalized our national thinking, that has widened our contact with national problems, and thus by community of interest has bound us together in a closer and more resolute union.

In thousands of American homes to-day, where our navy was a mere word in 1913, it has become a symbol not only of daring but of unselfish endeavor and high constructive purpose. It has entered into the national consciousness as part and parcel of the twin concepts of America and Americanism. It had already linked itself inseparably with our past; it is now no less a part of our future.

The day is not far distant when the world will witness an end of competitive building between nations of mighty weapons of war. In the peace treaty there will undoubtedly be incorporated President Wilson's proposal for a reduction of armament "to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety." Navies will still be needed as an international police-force to compel compliance with the decree of an international tribunal which will be set up to decide differences between nations. Naval vessels will have large peace tasks of survey and discovery and protection, in addition to police duty of an international as well as of a national character.

Inasmuch as the United States is the richest of the great nations, and has suffered less in war than any of the Allied powers, it will devolve upon this country to make a contribution to the navy to preserve the

peace of the world commensurate with its wealth, its commerce, its growing and expanding merchant marine, and its leadership in the council of free peoples.

It is now our duty, therefore, not indeed to enter upon any new and ambitious naval program, but to go forward steadily upon the lines of naval increase to which the country committed itself by the adoption, three years ago, of the first far-reaching constructive naval program in the history of the republic. The adoption of another three-year program substantially like the one authorized in 1915 has been recommended to the Congress.

## THE NEW PROGRAM OF CONSTRUCTION

The new program involves the construction of one hundred and fifty-six vessels, and prescribes specific numbers of battle-ships and battle-cruisers only, there being ten battle-ships and six battle-cruisers asked for. As regards smaller vessels, although the total number is to be one hundred and forty, it is simply asked that they be of types already approved and in existence, or of new types which may develop during the life of the program, the details being left to the discretion of the Navy Department. They should embrace craft of types already constructed, or new types demonstrated to be necessary by the experience of war, as the efficient and symmetrical development of the navy may require.

The total expenditure to be authorized for the purpose during the coming three years will be in the neighborhood of \$600,000,000. This sum is exclusive of estimates for emergency appropriations for new vessels building under war urgency, which total roundly \$140,000,000.

This program, which was indorsed by the

President in his annual message, and which I am confident will be authorized by Congress, will give us sixteen capital ships that will be the equal of any afloat at the time when they are built. The battle-ships and battle-cruisers authorized in the first three-year program will be unexcelled by those of any other navy, and the country may rest assured that our constructors will produce the most powerful and effective fighting craft.

The outstanding accomplishment of the navy abroad in this war, outside of vigorous and valorous service in the danger-zone, has been the character and degree of cooperation and practical consolidation for the time being of our naval units with the forces with which we have been associated. Beginning with the arrival of our first ship abroad, the navy has stood out for unity of command, even though in some instances it involved sacrificing temporarily something of our identity as an independent service. Its realization was not an easy task. It is believed to be a safe statement that the degree of accomplishment of our service in this respect is without precedent in allied warfare.

The American officers and men on our battle-ships were cordially welcomed on joining the Grand Fleet of Great Britain, and they have with it worked so unceasingly that they became part of a great homogeneous organization. They have given an illustration of team-work between nations as thorough as the team-work which had been established between different agencies in our navy.

The operations of our navy during the world war have covered the widest scope in its history. Our naval forces have operated in European waters from the Mediterranean to the White Sea. They have been stationed at Corfu, at Gibraltar, along the Bay of Biscay ports, at the English Channel ports, on the Irish coast, in the North Sea, at Murmansk and Archangel. American destroyers, American submarines, and other American craft have operated side by side and interchangeably with similar vessels of the nations with whom we are associated. Thousands of miles from home, sea-patrol and air forces of the United States navy have done much coast-defense and antisubmarine work in England and France and Italy, on the Mediterranean and in the Azores, always in close cooperation with the Allied forces.

On the day when Germany signed the armistice the enrolment of the navy numbered 497,000 men and women, and 2,003 ships were in commission.

It has not been possible for all of our naval forces, much as they desired it, to engage in operations at the front, and a large part of our work has been conducted quietly, but none the less effectively, in other areas. This service, while not so brilliant, has still been necessary, and without it our forces at the front could not have carried on the successful campaign that they did.

#### NEW FORCES IN NAVAL WARFARE

At the beginning of the war two potent weapons sprang suddenly into being—the airplane and the submarine. There were no provisions for these in the military textbooks of a dozen years ago. There were no facilities in this country for their construction in any considerable numbers, nor any well-defined tactics for defense against their attacks. It is gratifying to recall that the first forces of the United States to land in France for service against the enemy were our naval aeronautic detachments, and that our first naval ships to be engaged in active war duty were the patrol-boats guarding against possible submarine attack on our own coast, with our destroyers effectively searching for and sinking German submarines off the shores of Europe.

That our great ships of war and their auxiliaries should be found ready in time of need for any possible duty under old methods of warfare was something which the country had a right to expect as a matter of course. That we should be ready to meet the new conditions of warfare with such promptness and such efficiency is, I think, a matter of some congratulation.

I have had occasion in the past to express frankly my belief that our aeronautic progress had not been very satisfactory up to the declaration of war. As a new branch of naval activity, using a new war machine for a new purpose, this was not to be wondered at. But during the intervening months to the close of the war the Aviation Division made gratifying strides. Continuing the policy of being, so far as possible, self-sustaining, we erected our own airplane factories. Within three months of the beginning of the work on the buildings, the keel of the first naval flying boat was laid.

The problem of patrol-boats for our own

coast was another novel and perplexing question. The use of a large number of small boats, some of them less than one hundred feet in length, as an important factor in naval warfare, was not contemplated until recently. The possibility of their creation as an organized force has been a recent addition to naval strategy. A hurried survey of the situation revealed that there were not enough suitable private craft to meet the demands of the situation, and at the very first prospect of hostilities, before war was actually declared, we undertook the construction of hundreds of small boats. All up and down our coast small-craft shipyards have been busy with this work.

#### OUR INCREASED BUILDING FACILITIES

To put a fleet into being requires ships, guns, ammunition, men, and provisions. Our own mercantile marine, unfortunately, unlike that of Great Britain, was not large enough to have created for its own purposes these enormous ship-building facilities which have made this particular problem comparatively easy for our British allies. In fact, the ship-building resources of our country were so small as to make the execution of our new naval program impossible without additions to the private yards, as well as to our navy-yards. From this one may understand the difficulties of enormously increasing this construction and at the same time affording every possible facility for the building of cargo-carrying vessels in undreamed-of quantities.

When new requirements of naval warfare made evident the necessity of building a very large number of additional destroyers, there was literally not a vacant shipway in the country to hold them. Speed was everything, as indeed speed has been the greatest necessity of the war. Not only were there no ways for the ships, and in many cases no ground in the shipyards to build such ways, but there were not, to take one single instance, enough forge-plants in the United States to forge their shafts and propelling machinery, without suspending the arming of our troops.

The American public has since learned more in detail as to the way in which this problem has been met. It has heard how keels are being laid to-day on ground that was swamp-land a few months ago; how the finishing touches have been put on extensions to forge-plants which in some cases

are larger than the original plants themselves; how every manufacturer who could make anything needed for a destroyer—always keeping in mind the imperative needs of the army proper—has been set to work on this task. It has not always been easy to get the necessity for speed, speed, speed into the heads of those who did this work, but on the whole we think we have done well.

The problem of sending a continuous stream of supplies to our ships on foreign service has been one that required the closest cooperation between our Division of Operations and our Bureau of Supplies and Accounts. The credit for the excellent way in which this has been done rests alike on both.

Nor have we forgotten in our haste to pay attention to the health of our personnel. Additional hospital ships have been fitted out as required, many emergency hospitals on shore stations in this country and in Europe have been erected, and the health of the men in our training-camps and afloat has been splendidly looked after.

War-ships without guns are useless. To provide guns for ourselves, and for the merchant marine as well, has been one of our most difficult problems, particularly owing to the enormous needs of the army. Nevertheless, merchantmen have gone forth properly armed, and no navy boat has been crippled by the lack of battery.

#### OUR NAVY FIGHTS ON LAND AND SEA

Despatches from France have described the destruction wrought behind the German lines by huge naval guns operating with the American forces. These guns were originally intended for the new battle-cruisers, but a change in the design of the cruisers left the guns available for other use. As the navy had no immediate need for them afloat, it was recommended that they should be placed on railway mountings for land service with the armies in France. The American naval guns throw a heavier projectile, and have a greater muzzle velocity, than any previously placed on a mobile shore mounting.

From the first it was seen that in order to make the project successful, the railway battery must be made completely mobile, so that it might operate without being based at any one particular spot. For this reason it was necessary to provide not only the railway-cars to mount the guns, but also

locomotives and cars sufficient to accommodate all the operating personnel of the expedition, together with the ammunition, repair-shops, cranes, construction material, sand, timber, fuel, and cars of several types for special purposes. Practically all the equipment is covered with armor-plate, sixteen hundred square feet of it being required.

Some reference must be made to one of the most important accomplishments of the Bureau of Ordnance in this war—that of establishing, in cooperation with the British navy, the North Sea mine barrage. This, the largest ordnance work of the kind ever undertaken, was designed to bar, so far as possible, the egress of German submarines from their home bases into the Atlantic.

Officers of the Bureau of Ordnance contended that the most effective way of combating the submarine would be to blockade the enemy's coast by means of mines or antisubmarine devices, and urged the placing of a barrier across the North Sea to prevent submarines from getting through. They made a thorough study of the various types of barrage, including nets, nets in combination with mines and bombs, and mines alone. They concluded that mines offered the only practicable solution of the problem; but no mine then existing appeared to be satisfactory for the purpose, so a new and improved type was invented, and many thousands were manufactured and transported overseas.

As a result, the North Sea was closed by a mine barrage extending from the Orkney Islands to the territorial waters of Norway, together with a barrage across the Straits of Dover. It is probable that the number of submarines sunk or disabled in the barrage will never be definitely known, since it has been impossible to keep close observation continuously on a line two hundred and fifty miles long, but the military results obtained more than justified the effort and cost expended.

It is not generally realized, I may add, that in Europe we have had quite a large personnel on shore, and that we have es-

tablished more naval stations in France than in England. On the west coast of France we have a series of bases for the repair and upkeep of our ships.

All the way from the Spanish border clear around to the English Channel we have established aviation stations, so spaced that the entire coast-line has been covered by seaplanes and dirigibles. Nearly all these stations are located at out-of-the-way points, some on uninhabited islands, others on fishing-vessels. Labor was almost impossible to get, so these stations were built almost entirely by our own sailors.

We have also built a pipe-line clear across Scotland, through which oil can be pumped from the west to the east coast, saving a tremendous length of haulage in supplying vessels in the latter quarter with fuel oil.

It is worth while to refer to the criticisms expressed by some ill-informed persons regarding our ships in reserve before war was declared. The groundlessness of such criticism was shown by the speed and absence of friction with which every one of those reserve ships, which had been pictured as slowly melting into heaps of rust at their docks, was manned, provisioned, and sent out when the time came, ready to give account of itself.

It is too early to tell the full story of the accomplishments of the American navy during the great war, now happily a tragedy of the past. It will require the quiet perspective of the future, after the stress of battle, for a full assessment of the valor of the men of the sea, their resourcefulness, their initiative, and their forgetfulness of self in the whole-hearted and efficient service of their country.

The navy has been called upon to guard our coast, to convoy our merchantmen and troop-ships, to aid our allies in the sinking of submarines, and to be prepared with its main fleet for any eventuality. The great question is:

"Has the navy measured up?"

It is my firm belief that it has, and that the country has every reason to be proud of its record and confident of its future.

#### GUARDIANS OF THE SEA

SILENT and somber lie the mighty guns—  
 Their country's banner waving fair and free—  
 Whose steadfast purpose forced the prowling Huns  
 To full surrender on the surging sea.

*William Hamilton Hayne*

# How Inventions Are Made

EVERY NEW SCIENTIFIC FACT MAY PROVE TO BE OF PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE, AND MAY LEAD FROM ONE DISCOVERY TO ANOTHER IN SOME DIFFERENT FIELD

By Fred C. Kelly

**O**FFHAND one is not likely to see any very close connection between the modern automobile and gas and electric lights of the sort in common use a few years ago. Yet, but for the efforts of scientists to get more light from the same amount of energy, the automobile would be a far heavier and clumsier piece of construction than it is to-day. One might express it in the form of a conundrum and inquire:

"Why did a better light mean a lighter automobile?"

The answer is that in seeking a better light, scientists hit upon a better way of alloying steel, and that revolutionized the whole automobile industry. Moreover, it also revolutionized the method of making the tools used in making automobiles.

It is doubtful if any single invention or forward step in bringing the automobile to its present high state of efficiency has been half so important as the item of alloy steel. Without it, a car would cost more to build and vastly more to operate. It would wear out more rapidly, and its much greater weight would mean more mechanical trouble on the road. It would be a far less satisfactory vehicle for the rich man, while the poor man could not think of owning one.

The story of tungsten steel is a striking illustration of the fact that when one makes a real scientific discovery, there is no telling how far-reaching may be its application.

To start with, there was the Welsbach gas-mantle and the old carbon incandescent electric lamp, one being about as popular as the other. The electrical engineers felt that they ought to be able to improve the incandescent light, and a wonderful series of experiments was carried on in the laboratories of one of the big electrical companies.

First they improved the lamp with the little carbon filament inside. Then they produced a lamp with a new metal filament, which was known as the tantalum lamp. Next came the lamp with a filament made of tungsten. By mixing fine tungsten with a binder and squirting it through a die, they got a filament that would give three times as much light, for the amount of electrical energy consumed, as they had ever been able to obtain before.

But the trouble was that the tungsten filament was extremely fragile—almost as brittle as a piece of finely spun glass. The least little jar to a tungsten lamp, and the filament was broken. So the next step was to try to make tungsten malleable—that is, to make it less brittle, so that it could be bent, or shaped, without breaking.

The efforts to get malleable tungsten required several years of patience. They tried different processes, different temperatures, eliminated one impurity after another, and finally found that which they sought. It was all the more of an achievement because there was nothing especially romantic about it. The man who sends the first wireless message has ample public acclaim to reward him for his labor, but when you get malleable tungsten the immediate result is simply that you have malleable tungsten.

The next problem was to get tungsten into the form of a wire, and this proved to be no easy task. The experimenters could think of nothing except a diamond hard enough to use for a die through which to draw the wire. And so their task was to bore a neat little hole in a diamond—a hole perhaps the five-thousandth part of an inch in diameter. After a great deal of work, and after totally ruining a number of stones, they succeeded not only in piercing a diamond, but in drawing more than

two thousand feet of fine tungsten wire before the first die broke. And the drawing of that wire marked the birth of the tungsten lamp that we know to-day.

But for the tungsten lamp with its high efficiency, giving much light for a small amount of energy, it is doubtful if the electrical illumination of automobiles would be practicable. Otherwise, it would need batteries too large and bulky, with larger generators to charge the batteries, and the lamps themselves would be burning out at inopportune moments and places.

Metallic tungsten gave us a new X-ray tube, with which it became possible to make X-ray pictures that are far in advance of any known before. It provided, also, better receivers for wireless telegraphy and telephony, making it possible for a man in New York to talk to his wife in San Francisco—assuming that the facilities are available, and that he wishes to talk to her.

It is pointed out by Charles F. Kettering, an engineering genius to whom I am indebted for most of the scientific facts in this article, that while materials of high strength like alloy steel are used for the body of the automobile, the part of the car which comes in immediate contact with the ground is a purely organic substance. In theory, one might expect to find just the reverse.

And that reminds me of another simple yet vastly important item in the development of the automobile. Except for improved methods in the vulcanizing of rubber, the modern automobile would never have been a success. Engineers have never been able to get anything that will take the place of the pneumatic tire, and the pneumatic tire of to-day would be a wofully unsatisfactory thing if it were no more durable than the tire of a few years ago.

Tires made of rubber, a soft, pliable substance, will frequently run for ten thousand miles without a puncture or a blowout, while horseshoes made of iron are completely worn out after they have traveled only a few hundred miles. Even leather seems more durable than rubber, but a man walking on smooth sidewalks wears out a pair of leather-soled shoes every few months, while his automobile tires, passing over rough roads and carrying perhaps a thousand pounds of weight apiece, may last him for a year or two. When one stops to think of such things as this, the vulcanizing of rubber becomes a wonderful achievement.

Nobody knows what may be the next

radical improvement in automobiles. It is predicted that some day we shall do away with glass wind-shields and glass in the sides of closed cars.

When the great war broke out, American powder-makers built new factories many times as large as they had formerly needed. Some time ago they began casting about for some use for these plants after the war. They experimented with celluloid products—celluloid containing many of the same chemical elements used in making explosives. We now have celluloid articles that are non-inflammable and almost as beautiful as ivory. It seems quite possible that we may soon have celluloid as transparent as plate glass, and so pliable that it may be rolled up like an ordinary window-shade.

#### THE INVENTIONS OF JOHN W. HYATT

A good many years ago a man named John W. Hyatt—a printer who had turned inventor—became interested in the matter of a substitute for ivory in the manufacture of billiard-balls. Elephants were becoming scarce, and the price of ivory was rising. In fact, it seemed as if Providence had put just enough elephants into the world to furnish us with billiard-balls until somebody could invent something better than an ivory ball. And so, about the time when billiard-balls began to mount in price because of the scarcity of elephants, Hyatt had a new kind of ball ready.

In his search for a better billiard-ball, Mr. Hyatt became deeply interested in the subject of elasticity. No matter what he looked at, whether a stone, an apple, a piece of steel, or a lump of coal, he wondered how elastic it might be—how much "give" there was to it. As a consequence of his investigation into the subject of elasticity, one of the things he invented was a roller-bearing for automobiles. He made rollers out of pieces of spring steel. The principle involved in this type of bearing had been in existence, waiting to be utilized, since the world first got under way, but it might never have been discovered except for the increase in the value of elephants, and the need of a new kind of billiard-ball.

One of the materials that Mr. Hyatt developed in his efforts to improve on the ivory billiard-ball was celluloid. It was his work that made the camera film possible. When one pauses to consider the

scope of the camera film, one is forced to the conclusion that we could scarcely get along without it. For instance, if there was no camera film there would be no motion-pictures; and what would become of the world without motion-pictures?

Another by-product of Mr. Hyatt's experiments was the scleroscope, an instrument for the measuring of elasticity. If you drop a wet tennis-ball on a cement pavement, there will be a spot on the pavement which indicates to what extent the ball flattened out. By counting the number of times the ball bounces, after dropping from a given height, and considering this in connection with the print the ball makes, you can compute its elasticity.

Likewise, if you drop a billiard-ball on a hard surface, it will flatten out somewhat and rebound a number of times. The scleroscope is designed to measure this elasticity with scientific accuracy.

Mr. Hyatt abandoned celluloid, so far as his billiard-ball was concerned, but he continued his efforts until a satisfactory ball of a new material was developed. The material used was the joint work of Mr. Hyatt, Dr. Leo Baekeland, and Charles Burroughs, and consisted of a silk fiber mixed with bakelite and molded under hydraulic pressure.

#### BAKELITE AND CONDENSITE

And this brings us to consider bakelite itself—a material which in recent years has come to have various important uses in electrical work and in more than a score of big industries. Bakelite, invented by Dr. Baekeland, and named after him, is a product of carbolic acid and formaldehyde. These two liquids, when brought together, form something that appears much like ordinary resin, from which paints and varnishes are made.

Here is the peculiar feature of the compound—if allowed to solidify, it may be redissolved by the use of any one of several chemical solvents. But if the product is heated beyond a certain point, where a secondary reaction takes place, its characteristics undergo a complete change. For one thing, it becomes practically impossible to dissolve it by any chemical process known.

It has a high insulating value, and is used not only in various electrical apparatus, but in numerous details of automobile construction. The little cap on the radiator,

which appears to be coated over with hardened rubber, is in reality covered with bakelite. Many steering-wheels are also made of this same material, and electrical starting and lighting equipment on automobiles was greatly simplified by its use.

In its solvent state bakelite is used in varnishes, and has revolutionized the methods of lacquering brass beds. There is a fair chance that the buttons on your coat are bakelite—also the bowl and mouth-piece of your pipe, the heads of your wife's hatpins, and the body of your child's doll.

It so happened that just about the time when bakelite was discovered, another man, the late Dr. Aylesworth, in the laboratories of Thomas A. Edison, was putting the finishing touches to a similar compound of carbolic acid and formaldehyde, now known as condensite. Condensite was developed by Dr. Aylesworth in connection with his quest for a material that would make a more durable phonograph record than was then known. The world had long been waiting for just such a compound, and it was a strange coincidence that two scientists, working independently, should hit upon it at practically the same time.

#### THE DEWAR FLASK, OR THERMOS BOTTLE

When a man discovers something new, there is almost no limit to the imprint he may make on industry. A little idea often proves to be a big thing.

Some years ago Sir James Dewar, the well-known Scottish scientist, began to experiment with low temperatures of air. In order to keep a quantity of air at a given low temperature, he found it necessary to invent what became known as the Dewar flask. This is simply a glass vessel with an inner wall and an outer wall. All the air is pumped from the space between the walls, leaving a vacuum. The heat conductivity of such a flask is so low that its contents will change temperature very slowly.

Sir James had no idea of inventing anything for commercial purposes when he made his flask, but the possibilities of the thing were so obvious that in due course somebody made it commercially profitable. It is, of course, what we know as a thermos bottle.

Just as Franklin sent up his kite and drew electricity from the clouds, men are constantly hitting on new scientific discoveries. One morning a young man employed

in a big experimental laboratory was enjoined by his wife, as he left home, to be sure to bring her two or three small pie-pans that evening. As he was about to start home it occurred to him that he had forgotten all about the pie-pans—also that the stores were closed for the day. Rather than face his wife without some kind of pan, he went back into the plant where he was employed to see what he could find.

Unable to locate anything in the way of tinware suitable for pie-baking, he finally took a glass-cutter and cut off the lower part of some large glass battery-jars. After beveling off the sharp edges he took these home and told his wife that they were the very latest thing for cooking pies—that they were far superior to tin, and were being used by the best families. They joked back and forth about this, and in due course she put some pies in the oven.

#### A HOUSEWIFE'S SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENT

The next day, so the story is, she told him that the use of his new-fangled glass pie-dishes had been accompanied by astonishing results. Her pies had baked more rapidly than they ever had before. She added that she intended to try the glass-ware for making bread, to see if that also baked more rapidly.

Sure enough, it did that very thing. Her husband could not understand it, and reported the phenomenon at the plant. Thereupon other employees cut down battery-jars and took them home for their wives to try. All the wives reported that bake-dishes of glass meant more speedy baking.

Scientific experts then began to give attention to the commercial possibilities of glass bake-dishes, and to discover why a pie should cook more readily in glass than in tin. They found that it was easily feasible to make a glass that would withstand heat, and that could be dropped to the floor without necessarily breaking. That part of the problem was comparatively easy; but why did things cook faster in glass?

After a vast amount of research they established several new facts about heat. These facts were once explained to me, but they sounded so learned and scientific that I was unable to catch more than the main drift of the conversation. However, one thing they found out was that there is a form of heat-energy somewhat similar to light. This form lacks illuminating power,

but it is checked to some extent by anything that would check the passage of light.

For example, if you sit in front of an open fireplace, the fire burns your shins. You place a tin screen between yourself and the fire, and your shins no longer burn; yet there is as much heat in the room as before. Then you take away the metal screen and substitute a screen of glass, which will afford protection, but will not ward off quite so much heat as the tin screen did. It appears that part of the heat-rays slip through the glass just as light-rays would. These invisible heat-rays, the scientists say, will pass through a glass bake-dish more readily than through a tin dish.

And so, because a man forgot to bring home the pie-pans his wife wanted, glass-ware for use in the oven has become a familiar article in stores and in homes.

Everywhere, it seems, are facts of one kind or another lurking about, waiting to be discovered. Either by chance, or under the pressure of some urgent need, we are continually discovering isolated sets of facts, and learning to make combinations of them. No idea, it is almost safe to assume, is ever really lost.

Not long ago a professor of botany at one of our leading universities desired to have a research hobby that he could indulge in solely for amusement. He wished to avoid, so far as this hobby was concerned, anything which by any chance might prove practically useful. He knew that if he once got at something which appeared to be worth while, he would feel duty bound to go on and on, and he would become a mere slave to that which was supposed to serve him for recreation.

After a good deal of casting about after something unmistakably valueless, he finally determined to devote himself to the study of a microscopic deposit found on the under side of the wings of a certain rare beetle, whose habitat is in a remote section of Africa. Up to the present time he has found no use for the information acquired from this line of research; but the experienced scientist will insist that any fact thus added to the store of scientific knowledge may conceivably prove to be of much practical use. Considered in connection with something else, it may possibly mean a new shoe-polish, a cure for baldness, an improved telephone, or—no telling what.

# *The Lost Glories of the Hohenzollerns*



FREDERICK II, SURNAMED THE GREAT

The Hohenzollern monarch who first made Prussia one of the great powers of Europe

From the painting by Camphausen



**WILLIAM I, FOUNDER OF THE MODERN GERMAN EMPIRE**  
With his two chief lieutenants, Prince Bismarck (left) and Field-Marshal Moltke (right)  
From the painting by Camphausen



BISMARCK AND NAPOLEON III ON THE MORNING AFTER THE BATTLE OF SEDAN

The great Napoleon humbled Prussia to the dust, but the Hohenzollerns had their revenge when his nephew surrendered at Sedan (September 2, 1870) and lost his throne

From the painting by Camphausen



#### THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE

The most triumphant day in the history of the Hohenzollerns (January 18, 1871), when William I of Prussia was proclaimed German Emperor in the throne-room of the historic palace of the French kings at Versailles

From the painting by Anton von Werner



BISMARCK DICTATING ARMISTICE TERMS TO THIERS AND FAVRE (JANUARY, 1871)

A truly German picture, in which the formidable German towers over the helpless representatives of defeated France - A dramatic reversal of this situation occurred in November last, when Marshal Foch handed his armistice terms to the German commissioners

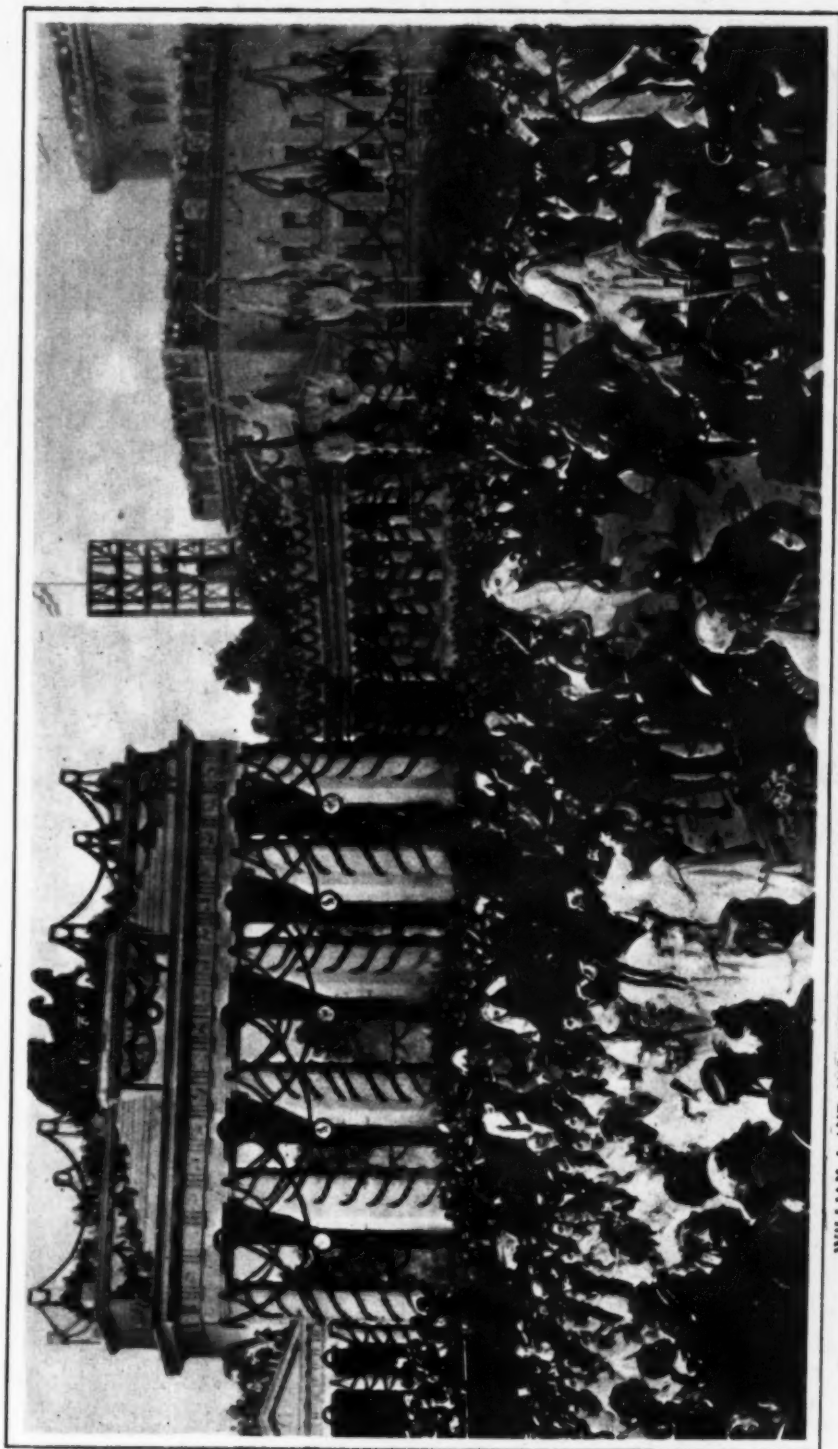
From the painting by Carl Wagner



FREDERICK III, SECOND HEAD OF THE MODERN GERMAN EMPIRE

Frederick, son of William I, succeeded his father March 9, 1888, and died after a reign of ninety-nine days

From the painting by Heinrich von Angell



WILLIAM I AND HIS VICTORIOUS ARMY ENTER BERLIN AFTER THE WAR WITH FRANCE (1871)

The emperor (near the center of the picture) has just ridden through the Brandenburg Gate, and is being greeted by a company of girls who are throwing flowers in his path

From the painting by Camphausen



WILLIAM II, THIRD AND LAST HOHENZOLLERN EMPEROR

This portrait was painted in 1890, when he was thirty-one years old and had reigned two years—"All those who oppose me I shall smash to pieces!" he publicly declared in that same year

From the painting by Anton von Werner

# Germany's Dethroned Princes

THE UNLAMENTED DOWNFALL OF MORE THAN A SCORE OF "PUMPERNICKEL"  
SOVEREIGNS WHO HAVE HAD TO FOLLOW THEIR IMPERIAL  
WAR-LORD INTO PRIVATE LIFE

By Frederick Cunliffe-Owen

**B**Y abolishing monarchy within her borders, Germany has relieved her people of an annual taxation to the tune of near half a billion dollars. They have had to support not merely one reigning family, but more than a score of them, comprising several hundreds of princes and princesses. Until recently it was the custom in America to speak and write as if the former Kaiser were the only ruler of Germany. But the Teuton empire was composed of a confederation of twenty-two states—besides three "free cities" and the Reichsland of Alsace-Lorraine—every one of them with its own sovereign, maintaining his own court, and claiming to be, not the vassal, but the ally and equal of William of Hohenzollern.

Some years before the war, the Kaiser conceived the idea of bringing home to the people of Bavaria, of Württemberg, of Saxony, Baden, and the rest, how much better off they would be in an economic sense if they were to dispense with their reigning houses and transfer their allegiance to the Prussian crown, in his person. He caused Privy Councilor Rudolf Martin, long regarded as a leading expert in the matter of Teuton finance, to compile elaborate statistics, proving that the non-Prussian rulers cost their subjects more than a billion marks, or two hundred and fifty million dollars, annually—all of which could be saved if they were swept out of existence, and all Germany brought under his imperial sway.

He failed to appreciate the fact that when the time came for the people of Germany to adopt Privy Councilor Martin's advice, and to rid themselves of their expensive monarchies, they would probably make a clean job of it, and apply a similar

treatment to himself, with his civil list of five million dollars a year, and allowances of almost twice that amount.

To the actual expenditure of money paid out for the maintenance of all these twenty-two sovereign families must be added their immunity from taxation, and the fact that large tracts of land—in some instances half the area of their states—had passed, through devious devices or forcible confiscation, into the possession of the rulers. These lands have now been seized by the revolutionary governments, have become once again the property of the people, and will be required to bear their proportion of the burden of taxation.

Formerly—that is to say, prior to the nineteenth century—matters were even still worse in Germany. Her empire—known as the Holy Roman Empire, though it was neither holy nor Roman, included as many as seventy independent states, each with its sovereign family and its expensive court, fattening like leeches on the taxpayer. The first Napoleon swept away the Holy Roman Empire, which ended by the resignation of Francis II in 1806. In 1814-1815, following Napoleon's downfall, the Congress of Vienna affirmed his policy by abstaining from restoring the empire, and by limiting the petty monarchies of Germany to twenty-six. The Kingdom of Hanover, the Electorate of Hesse-Cassel, the Duchy of Nassau, and the Principality of Wied were subsequently absorbed by Prussia, leaving twenty-two sovereignties, the disappearance of which is now about to be ratified by the Congress of Versailles.

There will be no disposition to mourn their loss. They have been of no real use to their lieges, or to the German nation as a whole. There is nothing that can be said



LUDWIG (LOUIS) III, THE DETHRONED KING OF BAVARIA, LAST MONARCH OF THE UNLUCKY HOUSE OF WITTELSBACH

in their behalf. Many of these petty rulers, to whom Thackeray so aptly applied the contemptuous qualification of "pumpernickel," have been afflicted with peculiarities of character bordering on insanity. Others have varied from mere imbeciles to homicidal maniacs, while the best that could be said for any of them was that they were inoffensive. That they should have been tolerated until last November seems almost incredible.

Probably the best of the lot was the septuagenarian William II of Württemberg,

who was called upon to abdicate, not so much on account of any objection to himself personally, but because of the pronounced unpopularity of his Austrian-reared cousin and next heir, Duke Albert of Württemberg, who was throughout the war one of the principal commanders on the French front.

The fallen dynasty had no hold upon the good-will of the people. King William's predecessor on the throne at Stuttgart, his uncle, the ignoble Charles, was a monarch of the grossest vices, whose mind had been

weakened by drink and dissipation. About forty years ago he fell under the spell of a couple of American adventurers, who by means of pretended occultism had obtained complete mastery over him. They were bending him to their will, at the cost of his purse, of his character, and of whatever vestige of popular respect and loyalty he retained, when at length his subjects rose against him, and compelled him to expel his two associates from the country, under a threat of relegating him for the remainder of his life to a lunatic asylum. Indeed, it

was only on the understanding that he would abandon the reins of government to his clever Russian wife, Queen Olga, and to his premier, Baron von Mittnacht, that he was permitted to retain his throne and a semblance of liberty.

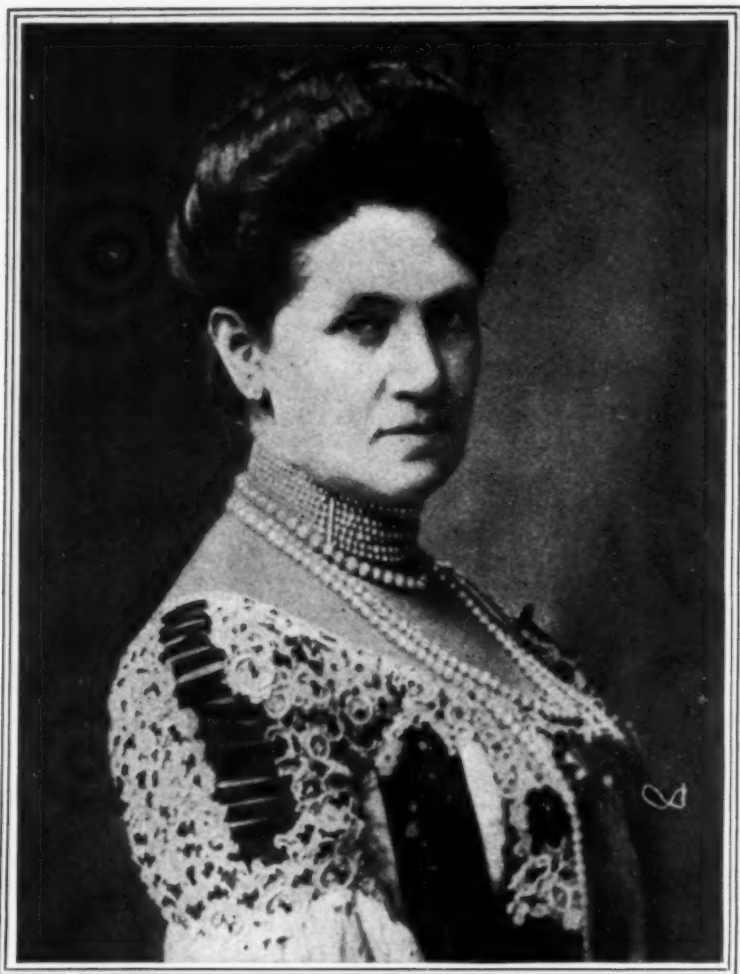
#### AN ENLIGHTENED AND LIBERAL MONARCH

William II, it is only fair to admit, is a very different man from his predecessor. He is credited with having been averse to the war which has just come to a close, owing in part to the fact that as a young



PRINCE RUPPRECHT (RUPERT), FORMERLY CROWN PRINCE OF BAVARIA AND  
COMMANDER OF THE GERMAN ARMIES ON THE NORTHERN  
PART OF THE WESTERN FRONT

*From a copyrighted photograph by the International Film Service, New York*



CHARLOTTE, THE DETHRONED QUEEN OF WÜRTTEMBERG, WHO BEFORE HER MARRIAGE IN 1886 WAS A PRINCESS OF THE DUCAL HOUSE OF SCHAUMBURG-LIPPE

cavalry subaltern he took part in the campaign of 1870. Having smelled powder on the battle-field, instead of in sham fights, like the Kaiser, he was appalled at the idea of reviving the horrors of the conflict of nearly fifty years ago. His attitude in the matter served to envenom his relations with his namesake of Berlin, the differences between them having originated in the days when the two princes were officers of the same regiment at Potsdam.

Enlightened and liberal, a man who had many points of resemblance to Edward VII, William of Württemberg always scoffed at the Kaiser's ridiculous pretensions to rulership by right divine. He made

no secret of his belief that monarchs were indebted to the will of the people for their tenure of their crowns. Unlike all his fellow rulers of Germany, who invariably put their helmets on their heads, in token of sovereignty, when opening or proroguing their legislatures, he remained bareheaded on such occasions, like every one else present, on the ground that he was just as much a servant of the nation as the members of his parliament.

King William is one of the most accomplished and enthusiastic chess-players in Europe, and never travels without a set of chessmen within easy reach. Until his recent abdication he enjoyed the distinction



WILHELM (WILLIAM) II, THE DETHRONED KING OF WÜRTTEMBERG, WHO WAS PROBABLY THE ABLEST AND MOST LIBERAL OF THE MINOR SOVEREIGNS OF GERMANY

of being the leading Boniface of Württemberg, for he inherited from his royal predecessors the principal hotel and the chief restaurant in Stuttgart. Possibly, in view of his liberalism and his generally amicable relations with his former subjects, he may yet be retained in the service of the people as manager of these establishments, which have prospered for more than two hundred years as the property of the crown.

#### THE UNLUCKY HOUSE OF WITTELSBACH

Bavaria's royal house has had a long history of misfortune, and four of her last five kings lost their thrones in different ways. Ludwig I was forced to abdicate in 1848,

after the scandal of his infatuation for the Irish adventuress, Lola Montez. His grandson, Ludwig II, was declared insane, and only escaped incarceration by his tragic death a few days later. The second Ludwig's brother and successor, Otto, spent more than forty years under close restraint in the palace of Fürstenried, and was formally deposed about three years before his death. And now Ludwig III has closed the record of the Wittelsbach sovereigns, probably forever, by his ignominious flight from Munich.

It appears that the third and last Ludwig was returning from a walk with two of his daughters when he caught sight, at some

distance, of a revolutionary mob marching upon the palace. He instantly took to his heels and fled to Switzerland, oblivious of the fact that he was leaving behind him, at the mercy of the mob, his elderly consort, Queen Marie Therese, who was dangerously ill at the time.

It was in February, 1918, that Ludwig celebrated the golden anniversary of his marriage to his wife, an archduchess of Austria. She is the senior of the descendants from the Stuart kings of Great Britain—that is to say, her descent from the Stuarts is less remote than that of King George. The members of the White Rose and Jacobite Leagues in England and America, prior to the war, were wont to insist that were it not for the Act of Settlement barring Roman Catholics from the British crown, she would be in possession thereof, instead of George V.

King Ludwig has always hated the Hohenzollerns and the Prussians. He still carries a Prussian bullet in his body, and walks with a pronounced limp, as the result of wounds received in defending Bavaria from Prussian invasion in the six weeks' war of 1866. He never lost an occasion of manifesting his impatience with Hohenzollern arrogance, and his resentment at the constant attempts on the part of the Berlin government to encroach upon the sovereignty of Bavaria.

Under the circumstances, it seems to be an irony of fate that the masses of the Bavarian people, who shared his dislike of the Hohenzollerns, and of everything emanating from Berlin, should always have looked upon him as a usurper, and as having played the game of Prussia. He never had any hold upon their loyalty or their affection, and his father, the late Prince Regent Luitpold, who took a leading part in removing the reins of government from the hands of his nephew, King Ludwig II, was so unpopular that his pictures, busts, and statues were constantly subjected to the grossest indignities.

The peasantry of Bavaria, constituting the bulk of the population, were firmly convinced, and are convinced to this day, that Ludwig II—the friend and patron of Wagner—was never really crazy. The stories of his homicidal mania, they declared, were mere Prussian lies, and he had been declared a lunatic at the instigation of Bismarck, and in consequence of his determined opposition to the Hohenzollerns.

So strong was this sentiment that in 1886, when Ludwig was drowned in the Starnberg Lake, in endeavoring to escape from captivity, Prince Luitpold did not dare to follow Bismarck's advice and assume possession of the throne. He contented himself with the regency, proclaiming as king, in succession to Ludwig, the latter's only brother, Otto, in spite of the latter's having been under restraint as a lunatic ever since he fell foul of Bismarck and the Hohenzollerns at Versailles, during the war of 1870. Otto, too, was regarded by many of his fellow countrymen as a victim of Prussian influences.

When Prince Luitpold died, in December, 1912, his son Ludwig considered it prudent to content himself with succession to the regency, and it was not until a year later that he plucked up courage to decree the dethronement of his cousin Otto, and to proclaim himself as King of Bavaria. His eldest son is the odious Crown Prince Rupprecht, who distinguished himself above all other German commanders in the great war by his almost incredible savagery and barbarity, especially in Belgium, where he was directly responsible for some of the most frightful outrages. About eight years ago he spent some weeks in the United States, with his unhappy and abominably treated wife, one of the Belgian queen's sisters, whose married life was one long martyrdom, finally brought to a tragic close by her suicide at Sorrento, in Italy.

#### THE DETHRONED KING OF SAXONY

Another German ruler who has always hated the Prussians, and abominated the former Kaiser, is the dethroned King Frederick Augustus of Saxony. His sentiments in this regard have been shared, not only by the princes and princesses of his house, but also by his subjects. During the war the French and English troops have borne tribute to the difference between the Prussians and the Saxons, all to the advantage of the latter; and it is said that more than once, when relieved from service in the trenches, the men of Saxony hoisted placards for the information of their adversaries, conveying the significant warning that their places were being taken by "Prussian swine."

King Frederick Augustus was the only monarch in Europe of his day to be afflicted with that strange malady to which the French have given the name of *petit mal*,

in order to distinguish it from the *grand mal*, or epilepsy. The Scots graphically describe the *petit mal* as "dwalms," and it takes the form of a sudden mental stupor, with an irresistible somnolence. Although

Sometimes, when receiving a foreign envoy in audience, Frederick Augustus would be found to be gently slumbering on the throne. At other times, when speaking, he would suddenly stop in the middle of a sen-



FRIEDRICH AUGUST (FREDERICK AUGUSTUS) III, THE DETHRONED KING OF SAXONY, LAST MONARCH OF THE ANCIENT ROYAL HOUSE OF WETTIN

*From a copyrighted photograph by the International Film Service, New York*

otherwise in perfect health, the Saxon king was in the habit of suddenly falling asleep at state banquets in honor of foreign sovereigns, at councils of his ministers, at great court functions, and even on horseback at military reviews. His tumbles from his charger on occasions of this kind were very unkindly ascribed, especially at Berlin, to intoxication.

tence, without any apparent reason, would remain apparently dazed for a few minutes, and then would either turn away or start talking about some different subject.

King John, the dethroned ruler's grandfather, suffered from the same strange malady. Moreover, in the closing years of his life he developed a form of mania with homicidal features. He made himself so

offensive to the ladies of the foreign legations that most of them left Dresden, and he ran his sword through one of his attendants. Furthermore, he solemnly assured his sons, Albert and George, that he was already dead, and that his remains must be

was buried in his stead, no one, not even his consort, being allowed to see the corpse supposed to be his. It is no secret that he survived his official death for a number of years, strictly confined in a monastery.

King Frederick Augustus, while some-



FRIEDRICH (FREDERICK) II, THE DETHRONED GRAND DUKE OF BADEN, A FIRST COUSIN OF THE FORMER KAISER

*From a copyrighted photograph by the International Film Service, New York*

laid to rest. Finally, when the doctors had decided that he was incurably and hopelessly demented, he was officially proclaimed dead, having been killed—so it was given out—by a fall from his horse while riding in the mountains. Another body

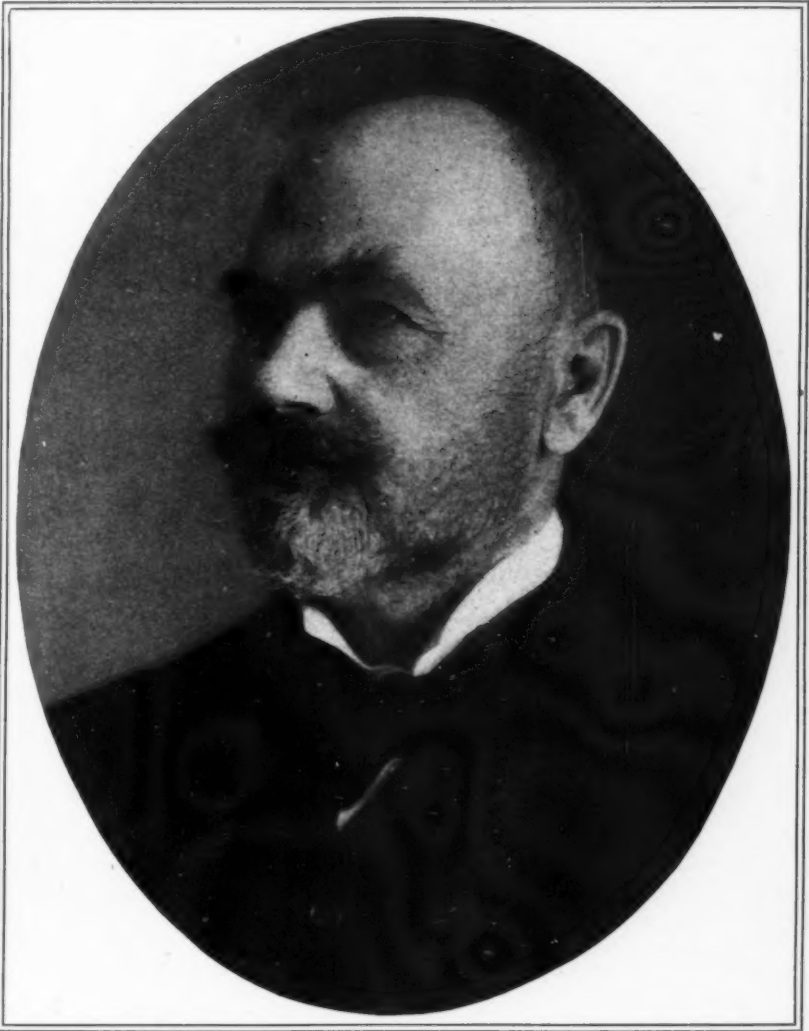
what coarse in manner and in speech, and in no sense an attractive character, has behaved with boundless patience and forbearance toward his former wife, the Archduchess Louise of Austria, whom he was compelled by his father, the late King

George, to divorce, in consequence of her sensational elopement with her children's Belgian tutor, Professor Giron. But as divorce is not recognized by the Roman Catholic church, to which he belongs, he still considers himself her husband—this, too, in

ily, he has continued until now to pay her an annuity sufficient to keep her from want.

#### OLDENBURG'S PECULIAR SOVEREIGN

The Grand Duke Frederick Augustus of Oldenburg, until his dethronement the other



FRIEDRICH AUGUST (FREDERICK AUGUSTUS), THE DETHRONED GRAND DUKE OF OLDENBURG,  
THE ONLY GERMAN SOVEREIGN WHO HAS VISITED AMERICA

*From a copyrighted photograph by the International Film Service, New York*

spite of her subsequent marriage to and divorce from an Italian pianist of the name of Toselli. Although she has treated him in the most abominable fashion, and has given her name to a book of "Reminiscences," ridiculing him and his whole fam-

ily, was the only German sovereign who could boast of having visited the United States. He came to America about ten years ago, under the incognito name of Lansahn, for the purpose of seeing one of his former aides-de-camp, the Baron von Plet-

tenberg, who had behaved with a good deal of chivalry and unselfishness in connection with a romance in which a princess of the house of Oldenburg was concerned.

The dethroned grand duke is a queer character. When his wife ventured to differ from him, he was wont to have her committed to an asylum, on the pretext that she was mentally deranged. He himself, during the decade preceding the war, had a habit of periodically retiring of his own free will to a sanatorium in Dresden, to remain in complete seclusion, on the plea that

he required rest from the cares and anxieties of administering the government of his tiny duchy. He used to complain all the time of suffering from "overwork."

He has a taste for machinery, and believes himself to be a mechanical genius. He devised a new kind of propeller for steamships, and when the late Albert Ballin, of the Hamburg-American line, declined to consider the invention seriously, or to adopt it for the vessels under his management, the grand duke laid the blame at the door of the Kaiser, not only as the chief



CHARLES EDWARD, THE DETHRONED DUKE OF SAXE-COBURG AND GOTH, A FIRST COUSIN OF KING GEORGE OF ENGLAND, WITH THE DUCHESS VICTORIA ADELHEID

friend and patron of Ballin, but also because he knew the former emperor to be a large stockholder in the company.

#### OTHER PUMPERNICKEL MONARCHS

It would be impossible to sketch, within the limits of a magazine article, the many oddities, idiosyncrasies, and foibles of the remainder of the recently dethroned pumpernickel monarchs of Germany.

For instance, there is the deposed Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar, second in line of succession to the throne of Holland, while his own second heir, until his recent downfall, was his cousin, Prince William of Saxe-Weimar. The latter lived for a number of years in the United States as a "remittance-man," under the name of William Rohde. He was always forestalling his meager allowance from home, and was compelled in consequence to resort to all sorts of extraordinary means of livelihood. He was successively a riding-master in New York, a hack-driver, a street-car conductor, a wine tout, and even a waiter at a hotel.

Then there is the Kaiser's son-in-law, the dethroned Duke of Brunswick, who is understood to have spent two years of the war under restraint in Austria as a lunatic, whose father, known as the Duke of Cumberland, is hopelessly insane, and whose grandfather, the last King of Hanover, was stone blind. At latest advices the government of Brunswick was a republic, which had for its president a mender of old clothes, as vice-president a cabaret juggler, and as minister of education a woman who could neither read nor write.

Another dethroned princeling is the Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, the posthumous son of King Edward's youngest brother, Leopold Duke of Albany. He was a schoolboy at Eton, having spent all his life



FRIEDRICH FRANZ (FREDERICK FRANCIS) IV, THE DETHRONED GRAND  
DUKE OF MECKLENBURG

in England, when forced—sorely against his will, it is said—to accept the succession to his uncle Alfred's petty German thrones of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. During the late war, however, the young duke distinguished himself by his manifestations of execration for everything English, although his mother, the widowed Duchess of Albany, makes her home in England, where she is dependent upon an allowance of twenty thousand dollars a year from the British treasury.

The deposed Grand Duke of Baden is a rather colorless individual, whose mother, still living, is the only daughter of the late Emperor William. Two of his predecessors on the throne have been hopelessly insane, and his cousin and heir, Prince Max

of Baden, the Kaiser's last imperial chancellor, spent a couple of years in an asylum at Doebbling, near Vienna, prior to his mar-

riage, in 1900, to the daughter of the crazy Duke of Cumberland. This was after the mysterious disappearance of the one-year-old Crown Prince Alexander, whose fate has furnished a theme for many dramas and novels under the title of "The Mystery of Kaspar Hauser."



ERNEST AUGUSTUS, THE DETHRONED DUKE OF BRUNSWICK, WITH HIS WIFE, PRINCESS VICTORIA LOUISA OF PRUSSIA, THE FORMER KAISER'S ONLY DAUGHTER

*From a copyrighted photograph by the International Film Service, New York*

riage, in 1900, to the daughter of the crazy Duke of Cumberland.

The grand duke has in his veins the blood of the old Swedish kings of the Vasa dynasty, and his sister is the present Queen of Sweden; but their great-grandmother

ing house of Baden from extinction. This was after the mysterious disappearance of the one-year-old Crown Prince Alexander, whose fate has furnished a theme for many dramas and novels under the title of "The Mystery of Kaspar Hauser."

# Friendship's Token

BY EMMA A. OPPER

Illustrated by George Brehm

THE noise on Andrew McKillop's porch went past ten houses, the engine-house, and the Baptist church, and assailed McKillop away down on Willow Street, which point he had reached on his return trip from the Olympia with the customary Sunday afternoon quart box of ice-cream.

The cause of the hubbub was presently apparent. Steve Raker was trying to put Mrs. McKillop off the porch and on to the ground, and her determination to foil him by clinging with shrieks to a pillar was producing a glad uproar among the four young McKillops.

Josie McKillop was young herself—fourteen years younger than Andrew, who was small, keen-eyed, razor-nosed, and forty-seven, and had taken his time about getting married. Josie was pink-cheeked and pleasing, and uncommonly so in her pink, Sunday afternoon dress and her white shoes, high-topped and high-heeled. She loved being up to the minute. McKillop liked her exceedingly. His wife, his four small McKillops, and Steve Raker, his best friend and pal—these in that order drained his affections and kept him happy.

But to-day he was troubled in his mind. The first obstacle that he had encountered for years in his prosperous career had suddenly arisen in his very path, and had left him with the feeling of a man thwacked in the face with a club in the hands of an assassin. The assassin was Kellars Kane, and Kane's wife was Raker's sister. A trying situation!

Whether it was McKillop's consciousness of it, or whether Raker in the gay tussle *did* lay an arm too far around Josie's waist, and whether Josie, between shrieks, *did* cast upon him a too provocative look, there was none to know or record; but McKillop slammed the gate, stumped up the walk, and set the ice-cream down hard.

"Say, ain't that a good deal of noise for Sunday?" he growled. "You'll have the neighbors calling the police."

"The neighbors? They'd better stop their children yelling and their dogs barking and their Victrolas screeching before *they* get fresh!" Mrs. McKillop retorted.

Just then, with a cumulative exertion, Raker detached her from the porch pillar and deposited her near the nasturtium-bed. She peppered him with threats of future vengeance, while the young McKillops screamed their joy.

Raker went into the kitchen and brought forth seven saucers and seven spoons. Josie distributed the ice-cream with impartial exactness, and it disappeared amid comparative calm, Josie sitting in the oak rocker with a red-plush seat which Raker had given them for a Christmas present, and which she had drawn out on the porch for the occasion. McKillop valued it highly, and generally occupied it, but now he cast a huffy squint at it and perched on the porch rail.

Raker was of an age at which high-school girls considered him quite an elderly bachelor—an age at which his friends had begun to send him comic valentines on the subject. He was thirty-six, fresh of face, good-humored, and popular. He was the proprietor of a trim and flourishing shop, where he sold cigars and soft drinks and newspapers and paper-bound novels, and read the books and the papers in the intervals. McKillop regarded his friend as quite literary.

"I hain't any business to be stuffing down ice-cream," Raker observed, as he stuffed. "My clothes cut into me round the waist worse every day." He balanced his emptied saucer on Birdie McKillop's head. "Want to perambulate around a little, Mac?" he said.

McKillop grunted in mechanical com-

pliance. The walks of the two on pleasant Sunday afternoons were as invariable as was the ice-cream in hot weather. Usually they footed it down around the Soldiers' Monument, or among the spooning couples in the cemetery, or went up to the Peterses', or over to Ed Beach's. To-day, however, accompanied by cordial parting shots from Josie and the little McKillops, Raker led the way in a familiar stroll through the

—'When the Midnight Choochoo Leaves for Alabam', and 'Will the Roses Bloom in Heaven?'—those ones."

"Bloom in Hades!" McKillop remarked. "Kellars Kane's instrument is it you're blowing about?"

"The same," Raker answered agreeably.

McKillop shied a pebble at a wandering robin. He tried to hold himself in, but failed.



"SAY, DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S THE  
MATTER WITH YOU?"

vegetable garden, over the back fence, across two fields, and up a hill where the young pines stood thick.

At the top he sat down on a stone and lighted his pipe. There being nothing else to do, McKillop sat down on another ledge and lighted his. He could not for the life of him have told why he had a grouch against his best friend, Steve Raker, of all men; but he had, and he wanted Raker to perceive it.

Raker smoked.

"Speaking about Victrolas," he ruminated—McKillop recalled with suspicion that it was Josie who had mentioned them—"Kellars and Milly 've got some slick new records—'Hawaiian Baby,' and 'They're Wearing 'Em Shorter and Shorter,' and 'I Didn't Raise My Ford To Be a Jitney.' I like some of the old ones, too

"He's a bow-legged, red-headed boob," he stated. "I don't care if he did marry your sister, Lord protect her! That's what Kellars Kane is."

"His foliage is kind of sandy. I don't know as I ever noticed his legs being out of plumb," Raker rejoined with judicial consideration.

"They round out," McKillop reiterated. Didn't it show that Raker was against him in the present critical case, his standing up for Kellars Kane's legs? "Mine don't, not so you can see it; nor they ain't broke off above the knees or anything, nor my arms ain't sawed off, and I sha'n't be ninety till my next birthday. You'd think, by the way Kane's thrown me down on that job, that I was a blind, old, dismembered left-over from Bunker Hill!"

"Nope! How Kellars put it," said Raker, "was this way. 'Mac's a good

man,' he says. 'I been a contractor for a number of years, and I'd trust him from here to San Francisco and back with any kind of a job at all,' he says."

"Said *that*, did he?" McKillop interpolated fiercely.

"Any color or description of a job,' says he, 'only this here one. Excavating for that road-bed clear from here to Sandy Point and laying them tracks is an undertaking for a man ten foot high and four across, if I could find him. It's a three months' heave with a jam and welter of horses and mules and machines and dirt and derricks and rocks and dynamite. Even so,' says he, 'Mac could bite it off up to there and get away with it; but when it comes to them Slavs and wops that he'd have to boss, it 'll require Jess Willard, by rights. It 'll take a fighter. A lot of them boys are scrappers, and mean as they make 'em when they've wet up out of the bottles that they tote around with 'em. It ain't only for recreation out of hours; I've seen 'em,' he says, 'throw down their picks and go to blacking one another's eyes any old time of day. They're a bum bunch, but where am I going to get any better? There ain't any to be had. And,' says Kellars, 'while Mac's equal to it with his *head*, he's—he's—'

"What?" McKillop interrogated.

"He's too little and he's too old for this job,' says he. 'That's the trouble.' He said it, I didn't," Raker assured his friend superfluously. "I'm just telling you."

"And I hear you telling me," McKillop responded. "I may be an ancient old cripple, but I ain't deaf!" Pride struggled with him, but the question he burned to ask burst through it. "What did you say to all of that?"

"Me?" said Raker. "Oh, I stood up for you. Sure! I took your part."

He stopped there. McKillop, vainly waiting for more, was ready to believe that Raker had entered no defense of him whatever. For that matter, how did he know Raker had not put the thing into Kane's head? Justice, not dead within him, demanded an immediate abandoning of that notion, but not before its sting had gone into his soul.

Andrew had wanted that job. He had counted on it. Several times over, in brisk imaginings, he had spent the money he would have got out of it, and had spent it

mostly for the unnecessary, pleasurable things with which a man who loves his wife and his children loves to surprise them. A new piano for Josie, who called the one they had a tin pan; something for each one of the kids; maybe a nice couch-hammock for the yard—his prospective purchases had floated in his head delectably. He couldn't get them now, because he couldn't really afford to.

His pride as a family man was hurt, and, worse, his self-esteem as a business man. Kellars Kane would likely talk these thick-headed, crazy ideas to other people, and he, McKillop, would get a black eye that might last him. Yes, just that!

## II

RAKER bent to scratch a match, and a thin book fell out of an inside pocket. It had a greenish paper cover, which displayed a picture of an ardent pair in an entirely unrestricted embrace. Raker restored it to his pocket.

"I can sell this kind fast as I can lay 'em in," he remarked. "You hain't read this one, have you? 'Seething Hearts'—that's the name of it. The girl in it, she got married, but she was so beautiful that every man that went into the ring with her got knocked out soon as they'd touched gloves. One of 'em was a friend of her husband's, and he fell in love with her and she did with him, and it was something terrible. 'An overwhelming and overmastering passion'—that's what she says, the woman that wrote it. And before they knew what was coming or how to stop it—"

"If that's the kind of feed you dope out over your counter, you'd better confine yourself to peanuts," McKillop observed.

"I thought when I was reading it"—said Raker. He broke off, and set a fixed look on his friend. "Did you ever think that things like that can happen in real life?" he asked abruptly.

"Any idiot that reads in the papers about the divorces knows all he wants to about what low-down folks do," McKillop assured him.

"They ain't always low-down, Mac," Raker rejoined earnestly. "Maybe sometimes it's what that book says—it's an overwhelming and overmastering passion, and they can't help it."

McKillop's patience was oozing.

"Say, do you know what's the matter with you? I don't," he snarled.

"I'm going to tell you, Mac. I can't stand it. It's on my conscience, and I've got to get it off. I can't live with it another day. I set to-day to tell you, and I'm going to if it kills me. Maybe it will—I don't care," said Raker.

He had laid his pipe on the ground and sat humped over with his face twisted aside, in an attitude of strange meanings.

"What's eating you?" McKillop ejaculated, arriving tardily at a sense of something wrong.

"You hain't ever suspected anything—anything at all about—*me*?" said Raker, with a low and halting voice. "About me and Josie? Of course you hain't. You'd have let me know it if you had. You'd have done something!"

McKillop's ordinarily alert mind traveled a few inches along the road laid out for him, and stuck there. His bewilderment rose to expression in a snorting laugh. Raker thinking he was sweet on Josie—Steve Raker! The poor loon! Not that it was unbelievable. Any man living might reasonably succumb to Josie's manifest charms. Andrew had done it himself.

"You know when you was working on the Wolverton dam, two or three years ago, and was gone six days in the week for nine weeks? That's when it happened," said Raker heavily. "Don't blame *her*, Mac. Put the blame on me, where it belongs. But I never dreamed we'd do anything *wrong*. We never thought *that* could happen. You was her husband and my friend, and she and me, either one of us, we'd 'a' died before we'd 'a' let it come to—what it did come to, if we'd had any warning."

McKillop had straightened on his rock as if some unseen hand on his collar had jerked him to transfixed stiffness. His sharp little eyes wore the dulness of stupidity.

"What's that you're saying, you?" he gasped.

"No power on earth could 'a' stopped it," Raker went on. "Whoever wrote that book understands it. She don't put it any too strong. I know now! Mac, I'm getting it off my conscience, and I'm going to tell you all. I've got to! The baby, Franky—you think he's your child, Mac, but—but—"

Raker faltered and stopped speaking. For a space, terrible to both men, there was no sound but the soft clickings among the branches around them. Then, out of

the dark chaos of McKillop's sensations, and following a few mute spasms in his throat, a husky speech pushed itself.

"Well, go on with it!" he commanded. "Anything more, you skunk?"

"No," Raker answered, immovable in his crouched and averted posture. "I've told you the worst of it."

McKillop was eying him from his head to his shoes and back to his head, in a groping effort to identify him. He looked wholly unfamiliar. Steve Raker—and Josie! A younger man than he was himself, and better-looking; but—his *wife*, Josie McKillop, with her rosy face and frank eyes, cheerful of disposition, a lovely dresser, clean to the verge of crankiness, a corking good cook. Josie!

From his perch on the hill her dazed husband could see his house, his garden, and one gleaming line of the clam-shells that edged the front walk. He remembered now that Raker and Josie had laid that border, and that Raker had gone clear to the shore after those specially large and white shells—for Josie!

He remembered a thousand things; they swarmed upon him. Josie sewing loose buttons on Raker's coats, the apparently natural attention of a kind woman to a neglected bachelor. Raker getting up a surprise-party for Josie's birthday. Raker coming around every Sunday afternoon of his life, and Josie calling up to find out what kept him if he was late. Yes, plenty of things to point him to suspicion, if he hadn't been a goggling fool! Not till this same day of Raker's revelation had he seen, in that tussle on the porch, anything to open his eyes. Never till this rough day!

The voice of Raker struck on his ears.

"If it would do any good to any of us," he said, nervously tapping his chin, "you or me or—her, to say I'm sorry, I'd say it."

"Keep your trap shut," was McKillop's instruction.

Scanning Raker again, he was choked by anger and engulfed in it. The miserable remnant! No *man* would have crawled to him with such a confession. Anybody but a sneak would have shielded the woman to the last gasp. He pictured himself in a like situation.

"I'd 'a' been cut in halves before I'd 'a' told on the woman," he reflected.

Poor Josie! It might have been passing insanity, and she might have been bitterly sorry for it ever since, but this traitor had

killed her last chance. He had done it to relieve his conscience. He came squealing about his conscience! The slimy, sickening meanness of him!

McKillop arose slowly. He was unsteady on his legs. He took his pocket-book from a safe pocket, and, with a shak-

case, but he found them too weak. He waited for Raker with glaring eyes set in a gray face.

Getting to his feet, Raker confronted him. He threw a wide look around, but any possible notion of help or of escape was lost in the jolt of McKillop's opening



CLUTCHING AT ONE WITH  
EITHER HAND AND  
KNOCKING MCKILLOP  
OFF HIS FEET

ing hand, he extracted from an interior compartment a small decorated card.

"There you be," he said. "That's the card you tied on to that golden oak rocking-chair you give us Christmas. I've kept that card, and I've prized it. 'Friendship's token,' it says on it!"

He dropped it to the ground and dug into it first one heel and then the other till it disappeared from sight in blackened shreds. Then he pulled off his coat.

"Come on!" he said. "Come on, you—  
—you—"

Lurid epithets trembled on his tongue, appalling names that would have fitted the

stroke, a hook to the body done with almost professional speed and efficacy. It jounced Raker's breath out of him. For half a minute they sparred. McKillop landed a weighty left-hander, and followed it up with lunges that hit their mark on chest and ribs and face—anywhere. Did he want to kill the destroyer of his home? He was too far gone in rage to know or to care. His thumps fell so fast and so hard that his adversary, for all his superior

height and heaviness, could not divert them.

Between ineffectual parryings Raker tried equally futile clinches to get his wind back. McKillop broke away with violence and showered his victim with whacks, rising on his toes and jumping clean off them, and working his arms with the awful regularity of some satanically inspired machine. Utter fury possessed him.

### III

DEEPLY occupied thus, Andrew did not see a large man clothed in a gray suit and a straw hat, who was coming through McKillop's own yard, crossing the field behind it, and heading toward the spot whereon he and Raker stood locked in combat. Neither did he hear with any comprehension the yell that his antagonist sent down the slope to the approaching figure; he took it for one more indication of Raker's bloody defeat. Hence, when the man, increasing his speed, plunged across the remaining field and straight up the hill, and, pausing for good aim and impetus, hurled his considerable bulk between the warring pair, clutching at one with either hand and knocking McKillop off his feet, Andrew, totally surprised and upset in his calculations, sprawled on the ground where the intruder and meddler had landed him and blinked at him with half-blind eyes.

It was Kellars Kane.

"There, Mac!" he observed pleasantly. "I guess that's an elegant sufficiency. I guess it 'll do!"

McKillop bellowed back at him. He strove to liberate himself, to rise to his feet, to get at Raker again so as to finish him, but Raker was holding him down with both fists on his torn collar, while Kane almost lay on him.

"Sit there, you lobster!" Raker roared.

Sitting there, for the moment, was a virtue of necessity. McKillop saw Raker's crimsoned face surrounded by wildly mussed hair, and his coat-sleeve half ripped out, and the sight was comforting. By degrees the meaning of what his enemy was shouting into his right ear wormed its way to his brain.

"It ain't true, Mac—not a single word of it!" the young man informed him. "I made the whole thing up. It was a long, juicy yarn. I was stringing you. Do you hear me?"

"Better say it some more," Kane warned him, taking a firmer seat on the prisoner.

"Josie McKillop," said Raker, "is straight as a string. She's as good as she was the day she tied up to you. She's good as gold. So'm I. I'd stand up and be shot before I'd play it underhanded with any man's wife. That time you was working in Wolverton I kept away from the Hotel McKillop all but Sundays, when you was home, for I knew the old cats in the neighborhood would have something to say if I didn't. Do you get that?"

"You—was lying to me?" McKillop found voice to utter.

"I was," said Raker.

"For what?" McKillop demanded.

"He'll eat you yet," said Kane.

"I was getting a good job for you," Raker explained. "Kellars says to me he wouldn't put you over that gang of pick-wallopers because you couldn't fight 'em. I says to Kellars you could. 'You got to prove it,' Kellars says. 'You show me Andy McKillop's got a kick in him, and I'll start him off next Tuesday.' I took him up flat, but I was stumped how I'd put it over, and I'd never 'a' got such a sure-fire scheme if I hadn't just been reading 'Seething Hearts.' That give me a pointer. Knowing you and knowing Josie, and knowing both of you individually and jointly, I figured it would work like a charm. Don't you ever tell Josie McKillop! I hated to do it that particular way, Mac, but I had to make good. I wanted to see you land that contract."

Raker, with a precautionary glance at McKillop, released one hand to find his handkerchief and mop his face.

"I calculated on putting on the act about four forty-five," he said, "and I told Kellars to be on hand in a front-row seat. If he'd come any later, I guess he'd 'a' found you and my dead corpse. I reckoned on you fighting, Mac, but I didn't count on you being a combination buzz-saw and war-tank!"

"I'd ought to 'a' finished you, by rights," McKillop exploded. "You escaped lunatic, you! You gink!"

But a smile made its slow way to his face, and stayed there, and crawled upward and around. Steve Raker had done this darn-fool thing to trip up Kane and get that job for him, McKillop. Raker had never done him any wrong. The man

was the same true friend he had known all these happy years. And *Josie*—his wife, his own *Josie*—

So vast a glow of relief and joy swept him that, coming after that pitch-blackness of misery, it overcame him. He tried to speak, and, finding himself unable to do it because his lips were trembling, he held out his hand to Raker. They sawed the air for a silent minute.

"You get the job, Mac," Kellars Kane said briefly but unmistakably. He was a

personable man, with no perceptible curvature of the legs. "And you get a cigar, Steve, the best I can buy off of you—that is, if you're able to smoke it. You look like the wreck of the *Hesperus*. What's that you've got?"

Kane touched his nose inquiringly. Raker looked cross-eyed at his own organ. It was red, and it was swelling. He felt it gently, and stopped to consider.

"That, Kellars," he responded, "is friendship's token!"

## What the Germans Have Lost

THE COST TO GERMANY OF HER WAR FOR WORLD DOMINION—HER LOSSES IN MEN, MONEY, AND TERRITORY, IN INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, IN THINGS MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL

By Brander Matthews

IN the first fortnight of November, Germany asked for an armistice and accepted the stringent stipulations under which the Allies and the United States were willing to grant it. In the second fortnight of November, in accordance with those stipulations, she surrendered her fleet of dreadnoughts, cruisers, destroyers, and submarines—this surrender of her navy being the outward and visible sign that she recognized and admitted her total defeat.

Before the end of the first fortnight in December the last German soldier had departed from Belgium and France, from Luxembourg and Alsace-Lorraine; and the British, French, and American armies had marched to the Rhine and across the Rhine, to hold important German frontier cities as pledges that Germany would abide by the terms of peace dictated by her victorious enemies, no matter how humiliating these terms might be.

And, therefore, it is now at last possible for us to take stock, to revise the balance-sheet, to scrutinize the profit and loss account, and to reckon up the deficit which Germany has now to face.

We know now what we could only surmise in the dark days of August, 1914, that

the war was deliberately brought about by the military party in Prussia—that is to say, by the little group which Dr. Van Dyke has aptly entitled "the Potsdam gang." The members of this group had planned and prepared for war; they believed that it was inevitable, sooner or later; and they were ready to begin it at the moment which they supposed would be most advantageous to themselves.

They were convinced that war was a profitable industry—a conviction more or less supported by their knowledge of the method by which Prussia had been able to expand its territory in the past two centuries. They had counted the cost in men and in money; and they had no doubt that they could make up for the loss of men by the annexation of populous territory, and for the loss of money by the exaction of enormous indemnities from the nations they intended to attack. And it seems never to have occurred to them that these calculations were profoundly immoral.

We know now that the decision to declare war, to strive for world dominion, and to risk the downfall which was its alternative, was taken by soldiers and not by statesmen. The diplomacy of Germany

was feeble and faint-hearted; and perhaps this was the reason why it was unable to exert any sobering influence. The soldiers were in the saddle; and they naturally took an exclusively military view of the situation. They were characteristically narrow-minded, obstinate, and arrogant; and at last they were able to have their own way.

If the statesmen had been competent, and had been able to make themselves heard, they would have pointed out that the increasing prosperity of Germany would instantly be arrested by war.

They might also have dwelt on the fact that Germany was steadily advancing toward world dominion by her mercantile expansion and by her insidious policy of "peaceful penetration," which had already given her, for instance, virtual control of the industries and finances of Italy. They could have insisted that Germany had relatively little to gain by a predatory war, and actually a great deal to lose.

We now know, also, that the decision of the dominant and domineering military caste was a colossal mistake. Germany has failed to attain world dominion, and she is on the brink of a downfall more precipitous than anybody had dared to suppose possible. She has gained nothing which she will be allowed to retain, and she has lost many things which she will never recover. Her losses are both material and spiritual; they are both external and internal; they are immense in the immediate present and incalculable in the immediate future.

These losses are so many and so various that they cannot all be reckoned; and yet there may be advantage in trying to set down in order a few of the most obvious and the most significant. Fairly familiar as they are, they gain force and weight when they are massed together.

#### THE LOSS OF GERMAN LIVES

First of all, most obvious, and most significant, is the loss of human life. In four years of fighting, it is probable that about three million Germans have been killed, maimed, crippled, blinded, or so severely wounded as to be a burden on the state so long as they may survive. And the men thus violently subtracted from the population are those of most value, in that they were very largely young men and men in the prime of life—the very men upon whom the future welfare of Germany would naturally depend.

A nation is strong and energetic in proportion to the stronger and more energetic elements in its population—that is to say, in proportion to the number of its young men; and it might almost be said that there are no young men in Germany now. Probably William Hohenzollern is the only Prussian parent who still has six uninjured sons. The flower of German youth has been sent to death; the future fathers of the race have been eliminated by the fatality of the battle-field.

Nor does the list of the dead tell the whole story. There has also been a decline in the birth-rate and an increase in infant mortality, while the death-rate of adults has been unduly swollen by the invalids and the aged unable to bear the privations of a long state of siege. Moreover, the boys taken into the German army in the last stages of the war had had inadequate nutrition for the previous four years; and these are the years, between fourteen and eighteen, when a lad ought to attain his growth and to acquire the strength which is to carry him through life.

This diminution of population is a very serious matter for Germany, where there had been for years a constantly increasing demand for labor, in consequence of the rapid expansion of commerce and manufactures. For more than a decade before the war began, emigration had come to a standstill; and every fall workers had to be imported to get in the harvest.

#### THE LOSS OF GERMAN TERRITORY

The military chiefs expected to make up for the men killed in battle by the annexation of populous adjoining territory. The expectation of a profitable readjustment of the frontier was the exciting cause of the declaration of war; and this expectation, of course, has been absolutely falsified. Germany comes out of the war shorn of not a little territory which was in her possession when hostilities began. Alsace-Lorraine, after nearly half a century of German rule, has been returned to France. It is practically certain that Japan will not give up Kiauchau, and that the Australians and New Zealanders will not be willing to relinquish the islands in the Pacific where the German flag has been hauled down.

As for the large slice of Africa which Germany had been allowed to appropriate, its fate after the treaty of peace is as yet undecided. It has been wrested from the

Germans; and there will be strenuous opposition to any proposal which may look toward their resuming control of the whole or any large part of it. This opposition will be strengthened by the recent revelation of the atrocities which their former masters committed upon the unfortunate natives. The French and the British, who have shown that they can govern their African possessions with a firm and yet gentle hand, will not relish the suggestion that they should return millions of helpless men and women to the cruel slavery of alien tyrants.

If it were not for this regard for the downtrodden and despoiled natives, the Allies might not be unwilling to restore to Germany at least a portion of her former possessions in Africa, because these colonies were never an asset, but rather a liability, in that they have cost Germany far more than they have brought in. They seem to be a source of weakness rather than of strength; as colonies they have been abject failures; they have not increased in population; and the severe rigidity of Prussian administration has deterred even Germans from establishing themselves under the flag of the Fatherland. The men who leave Germany to settle in Africa have preferred to go to the British or the French colonies, where there was less restriction, and where the individual was freer to work out his own fortune.

#### HEAVY DAMAGES TO BE PAID

It was also the hope and expectation of the military chiefs that all their expenditures upon the war would be met by the huge indemnities they intended to impose upon their conquered opponents, just as they had collected a billion dollars from France after the war which Bismarck tricked her into declaring in 1870. This hope, of course, has now wholly vanished. The Germans will not collect a dollar of indemnity, as they will not annex an acre of territory; while heavy damages will be assessed against them for the wanton destruction which they wrought in Belgium and in France, and for the devastation of which they were guilty in Serbia. All the wealth of the world would not restore the ruins of Rheims, of Ypres, and of Louvain; but German money will at least repair the dwellings of the citizens of these towns and of the farmers in the surrounding country.

The payment of these indemnities to re-

pair wanton destruction will be demanded at the very moment when the finances of Germany are least able to bear any added burden, and when she is finding it almost impossible to meet her own expenses. She has met these expenses for four years, not so much by those drastic increases in taxation which a people is always willing to bear in the fervor of war, but by floating loan after loan, and thus shifting the burden of payment from the present to the future. The interest on the older loans has been provided for only out of the later ones. The future has been mortgaged far more heavily in Germany than in any of the Allied countries, and at the same time there has also been an unprecedented inflation. Paper money has been issued in enormous quantities, and it is now without the security of an adequate gold reserve. The financial outlook is desperate, since credit is exploded and capital is almost exhausted.

By this time it is plain to the Potsdam gang that war is not always a profitable industry, even to Prussia; and as the former Kaiser and crown prince and the other leaders of this predatory band fled into ignominious exile, it must have been borne in on them that unprovoked war may be highly unprofitable for the individuals who are responsible for it.

Nor do these things complete the record of German loss. The recoil of war has caused a host of other breakages. It has pulled down an edifice which the Fatherland has spent scores of years in erecting—the gigantic edifice of German commerce and manufacturing.

#### GERMAN INDUSTRY DISORGANIZED

Germany has not been highly favored by nature; its climate is more or less harsh, and most of its soil is ungrateful; it has long been unable to feed its population, which in the years of peace and prosperity was constantly increasing. It had to import not only fertilizers for its stubborn fields, but also food and fodder. It found it profitable to rely on other lands for a large part of the meat and grain that it needed, because there was a swifter and a surer return for German labor in the factory and in the merchant marine than there was on the farm.

Germany was deficient in raw materials, but these she could bring from foreign countries, often to be returned to those same countries after she had made them

ready for human use. She fetched cotton from the United States, for example, and wool from Australia; and she sent back across the Atlantic and across the Pacific the woven goods she had made.

By a patient application of scientific methods Germany captured the making of dyestuffs from Great Britain, who had discovered the basis of the process. Because of her long hours of labor and her lower wages, she was able to take from the French the bulk of the trade in toys, and to compete advantageously with Great Britain and with ourselves in the making of electrical appliances, most of which had been invented either in Great Britain or the United States.

She was unscrupulous in her treatment of foreign patentees; and she did not hesitate to make colorable imitations of special articles protected by foreign trade-marks. Her competition was often unfair, but it was remarkably successful. Her manufacturers were splendidly supported by her bankers; and with their aid the Germans built up a superb organization for trade among themselves and with the foreigner.

This superb organization was totally disorganized by the long years of war. The British blockade—rendered far more stringent and complete, when the United States entered the war, by the operations of our War Trade Board—prevented the import of raw materials and the export of manufactured goods. Factories stood idle, or had to be adjusted to supply military necessities. The vast army of technical experts was disbanded; many if not most of them have been killed or maimed or blinded; it will take years of unrelenting endeavor to reenlist even a few of them, enfeebled and unfitted for peaceful labor by their war-time experience.

#### GERMAN COMMERCE DESTROYED

As with the factory force, so with the selling staff; and German trade with foreign countries is not likely ever to attain to its former proportions. France and England and the United States have been forced to make their own toys and their own dyes. Even distribution in the home market will be difficult for years to come, for the railroads are now in a state of dilapidation, since there has been for four years neither leisure nor labor, neither material nor men, for the proper upkeep of the rolling-stock and the roadway.

The case of German commerce is even more desperate than the case of German manufacturing. For more than twoscore years the German merchant marine had been growing. There were German lines connecting all the great ports of the world. In the Orient they were taking away the trade of the British, and in the traffic of the Atlantic they had won for themselves a foremost place. Now the organization, perfected by years of far-sighted energy, has been disrupted and destroyed.

A fortnight after the outbreak of the war, the German flag vanished from all the seven seas, leaving only a few merchant vessels safe in home ports, where they have been deteriorating for more than four years. Most of the German ships were laid up in neutral countries; and most of these have been taken over for the service of the Allies, as nation after nation joined in the war against the country which had willingly allowed itself to be ruled by the Potsdam gang.

Furthermore, the fate of the comparatively few vessels which are still in the possession of the Germans is yet to be decided. It is practically certain that at the peace conference a demand will be made upon Germany to replace the countless ships which have been lawlessly sunk by her submarines. As she will not be in funds to pay for the damage she has done, not only to her enemies, but also to neutrals like Holland, Norway, and Spain, it is probable that she will be required to surrender such vessels as she may have in her possession, as a reparation, however inadequate, for the destruction wrought by her ruthless naval warfare.

Perhaps she may have to hand over even the few boats now rusting in neutral harbors. This would leave her bereft of ships for foreign commerce; and the merchant vessels of the Allies are unlikely to be diverted to German service from the profitable trade which awaits them now that the seven seas are again free.

The difficulties under which the Germans will labor when they seek to get back their share of international commerce will be increased by the seizure of the docks in New York and in other American ports, which are more or less essential for the operation of the huge German liners employed in the Atlantic traffic. Perhaps this seizure will prove to be less important than it may seem, since very few Americans are likely

to be willing to cross the ocean in vessels manned by German sailors, any one of whom may be the very man who pointed the torpedo that sank the *Lusitania*.

It is to be recorded, also, that the sailors of the merchant marine of Great Britain and France, outraged by the brutality which the commanders of German submarines have shown in shelling the life-boats upon which the crews of ships sunk without warning had taken refuge, have proclaimed a boycott of Germany after the war, pledging themselves to sail in no ship which is trading to a German port or carrying German goods. No doubt there will be many other manifestations of the almost universal ill-will which is an abiding result of the evil deeds of the German navy; and ill-will is always a thing to be reckoned with.

We often hear it said that there is no sentiment in business, and that everybody is as ready to buy in the cheapest market as he is to sell in the dearest; but frequency of repetition does not make this saying true. If not altogether false, it expresses at best only a half-truth. We all know that however eager for gain we may be, we are prone to carry our preferences and our prejudices into our bargainings, and that we try to avoid having dealings with those whom we dislike, and still more with those whom we distrust.

#### GERMANY'S SPIRITUAL LOSSES

What Germany will have to outlive and to overcome, before she can do business with the rest of the world, is a sentiment far stronger than dislike and distrust. Perhaps it may be characterized mildly as a shrinking abhorrence and a personal repulsion. Germany is regarded as an outcast and outlaw who has earned the enmity of civilization.

Here we discover a German loss which is spiritual rather than material, even though it is sure to have material results. Germany has recklessly thrown away not only the good-will of the rest of the world, but its respect also.

Now good-will and respect are very precious; they are intangible, not to be measured in feet nor weighed on scales; they are what Bismarck called "the imponderables"; and nobody appreciated their importance more shrewdly than Bismarck himself. Manifold as have been the material losses of Germany, it may turn out

that they will prove less disastrous than the spiritual losses, which are doubly disastrous in that they are both external and internal. They are to be seen in the changed opinion of Germany now held by other nations, and they are also evident in the relaxed morality of Germany itself.

That their ethical standards have been lowered is recognized by the Germans themselves, and the resulting moral decadence is exciting alarm. Of course, war is always and everywhere demoralizing. When men must devote all their effort to the one purpose of killing other men, when that is the prime duty and the sole aim, all the other moralities have to give way; and there may have been more or less ethical deterioration in every warring country. But in no one of them is this deterioration fairly to be termed disintegration, except in Germany; and there it may be called moral deliquescence.

The German newspapers have been frank in admitting the enormous growth of juvenile delinquency, and even of adult crime during the war. A portentous increase was recorded not only in petty thefts, but also in burglaries. There was incessant forestalling and profiteering in the distribution of the food supply; and there were frequent charges of bribery and corruption brought against those entrusted with the administration of the food laws. The civil service, formerly believed to be impeccable, repeatedly yielded to the temptation of grafting. State officials were found in collusion with contractors engaged in cheating the government. These various illegal acts were not infrequent and sporadic; they were a matter of daily notoriety.

The relaxing of the customary restraints exerted by the social organization has probably been responsible for the alleged increase in sexual immorality. The standard which governed the relation of men and women was never very high in Germany; and all the information that has trickled to us from out the beleaguered land supports the belief that under the stress of war these standards have been still further lowered, even if we refuse to credit the heinous charge that the government itself favored and facilitated illicit unions for the sake of illegitimate children, to be utilized as the cannon-fodder of the future.

The war opened our eyes to the absurdity of the German claim to a civilization and a social order superior to those of

other nations. Before the combat began, even if we had to deny any superiority of Germany, we were not indisposed to admit an equality. It was untrue that other nations envied the prosperity of Germany; but they had learned to respect her as a rival not easy to compete with.

They were inclined to take her at her own valuation, and therefore to overestimate her contribution to scientific progress. A less friendly scrutiny of her claims soon made it plain that only two or three of the more important discoveries of the past half-century are to be credited to her, while she is the originator of scarcely a single one of the more useful inventions of the same period.

Our attention has been called to the fact that the Germans are very rarely originators. They lack spontaneous ingenuity; and it is significant that in the four years during which they devoted all their energies to war, they were able to bring forward no military device at once novel and valuable. The Zeppelin proved to be a failure, while the "curtain of fire" of the French, and the "tanks" of the British were immediately and continuously advantageous to their originators. The torpedo and the submarine, the machine gun and the airplane, are all four of them American inventions. Where the Germans have been most praiseworthy has been in the lesser things—in the untiring thoroughness with which they have worked out ideas originating in the more fertile brains of other nations.

The Germans not only vaunted the superiority of their civilization; they boasted that they possessed a larger share of the essential virtues; and while we could not admit that their vainglory was other than ludicrous, most of us had a high regard for German character.

Here again a more careful and less sympathetic consideration has compelled us to change our opinion. In four years of warfare the German spirit has been made manifest to us, and the German soul has bared itself before us; and we have had good rea-

son to shrink from the unholy revelation. We have failed to find the virtues which we supposed to be German characteristics. We did find vices which we did not believe to exist among any modern people. As a result of what we have beheld, we have recoiled from the hideous sight.

The Germans have presented to us the spectacle of a people swollen by indefensible pride and mastered by overweening vanity, a people dominated by unscrupulous greed and indifferent to the rights of others, a people untrustworthy and treacherous. Their diplomatists unblushingly asserted not only what they knew to be false, but even what they could not help knowing would soon be exposed as false. Their bond was no better than their word; and they felt no obligation to abide by any agreement, however solemn. Their army violated the treaty which protected Belgium; their interned officers in the United States repeatedly broke their parole; and their individual soldiers, after surrendering, have shot their unsuspecting captors in the back.

These things are bad beyond belief; but even worse is their ingrained cruelty, the most appalling and the lowest of the vices. At first we might be willing to call the Germans merely callous, but this adjective indicates only a passive indifference to human suffering, whereas we have had it borne in upon us that in countless cases the Germans found active enjoyment in inflicting pain.

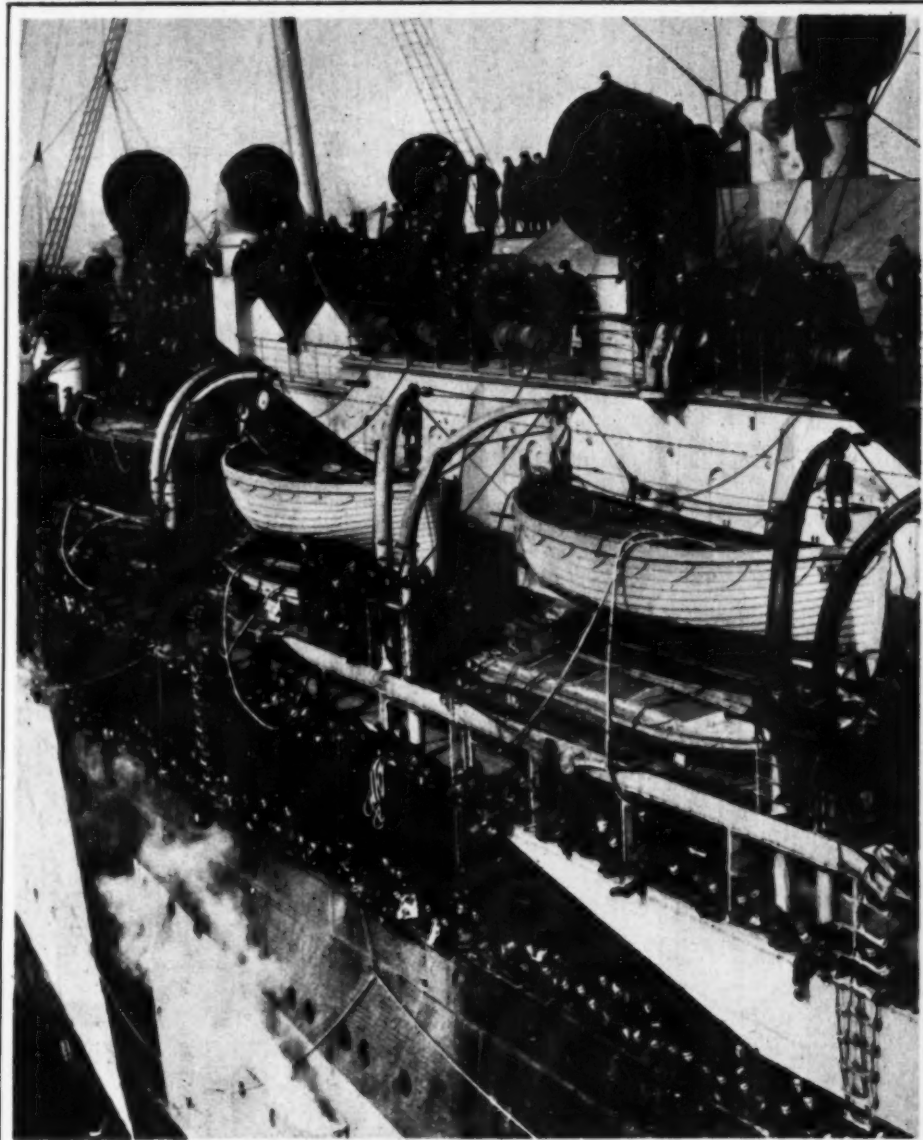
Burke declared the difficulty of drafting an indictment of a whole people. But this was toward the end of the eighteenth century; and even Burke's prophetic vision could not reveal to him that in the opening decades of the twentieth century civilization itself would draw an indictment against the German people—an indictment which will stand because the Germans themselves have supplied the exhibits that justify it. And it is this which is Germany's greatest loss—a loss more irreparable than the loss of men and money, of trade and territory.

#### MORAL STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS

SOME men, like adamant, unflinching stand  
Each buffet from calamity's rude hand;  
While others shrivel in misfortune's blight,  
Or merge themselves in shadows of the night.

*William Hamilton Hayne*

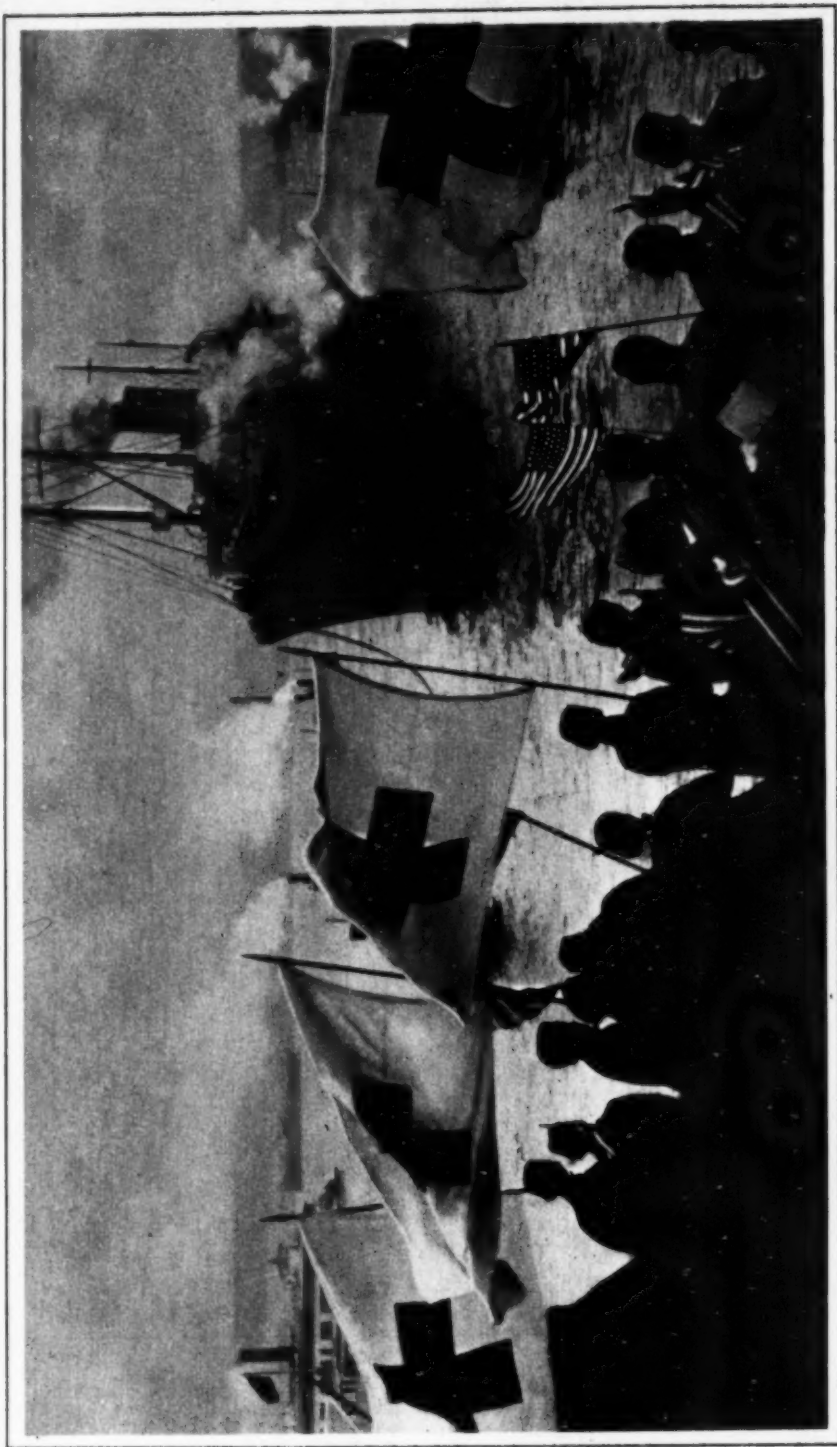
# *Told by the Camera*



## WHEN OUR SOLDIER BOYS COME HOME

A striking view of the giant liner Mauretania as she arrived in New York Harbor with one of the first contingents of American troops brought back from Europe

From a copyrighted photograph by Paul Thompson, New York



**A RED CROSS GREETING TO HOME-COMING SOLDIERS**

A chapter of the American Red Cross, with banners and a band, greeting the Celtic as she arrived at her pier in New York with wounded men from France  
From a copyrighted photograph by the International Film Service, New York



**TAKING WOUNDED MEN ASHORE FROM A RETURNING HOSPITAL SHIP**

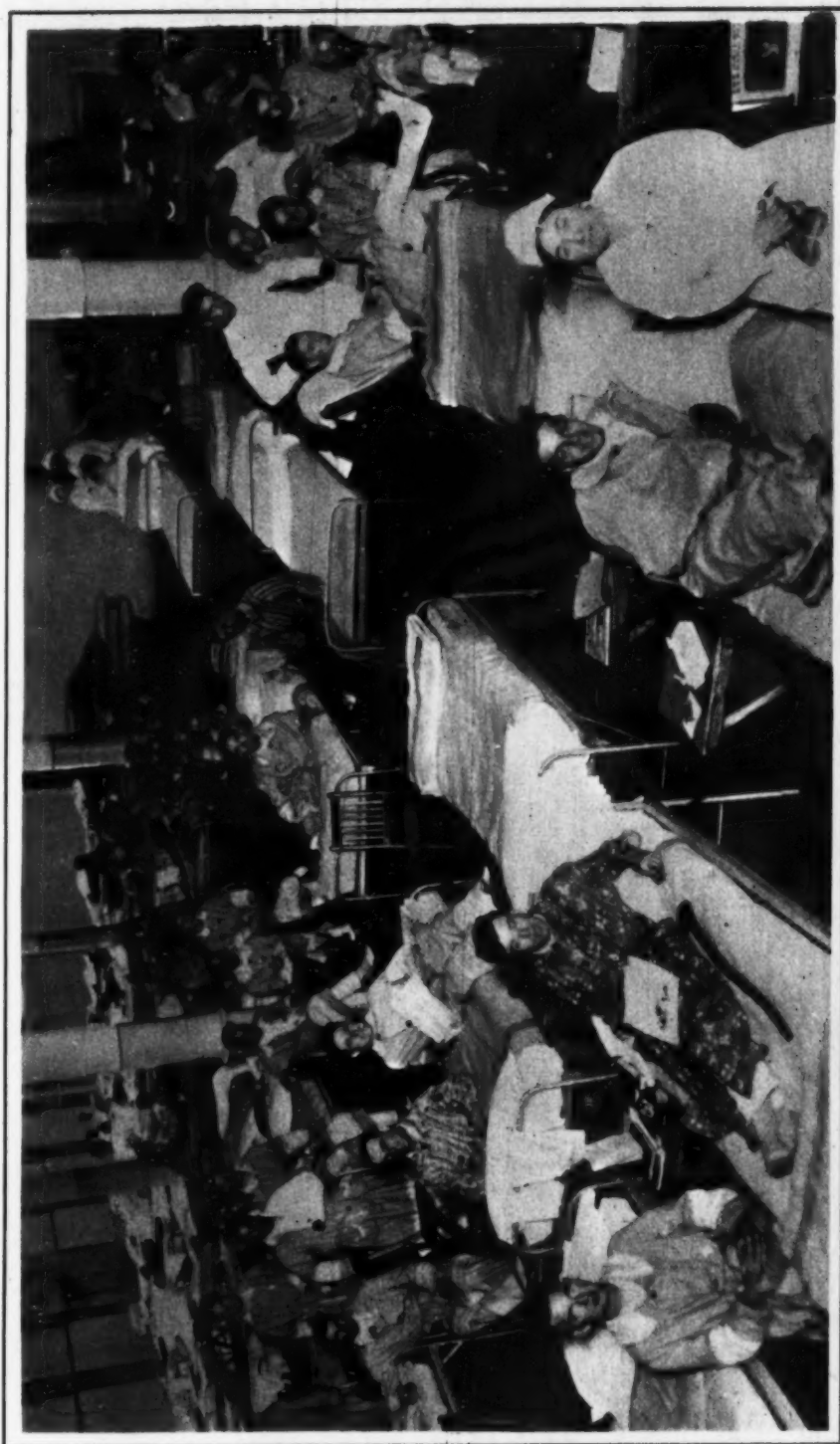
A Red Cross worker is giving cigarettes to a "stretcher case" as he is carried from the hospital ship Mercy at a government pier in Hoboken, New Jersey

From a copyrighted photograph by the Western Newspaper Union, New York



A RED CROSS AMBULANCE RECEIVING WOUNDED MEN AT THE PIER

This shows the next step in the wounded soldier's journey to the base hospital where, if skill and care can do it, he will be nursed back to health and strength



WOUNDED MEN IN A LARGE BASE HOSPITAL IN NEW YORK

The building, which was formerly the Siegel-Cooper department-store, has been turned into a hospital with accommodations for four thousand men  
From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York



MRS. GEORGE W. VANDERBILT

Acting as a volunteer driver for hospital work during the influenza epidemic in Washington

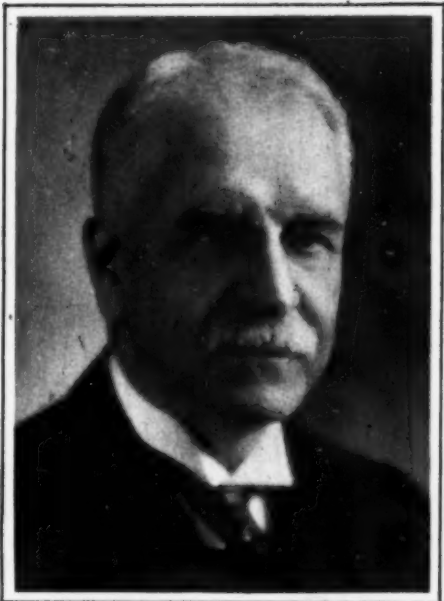
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CHARLES A. PIEZ

Who has succeeded Charles M. Schwab as director-general of the Emergency Fleet Corporation

Copyrighted by Clineinst, Washington



ALEXANDER C. KING, OF GEORGIA

Who has succeeded John W. Davis as Solicitor-General of the United States

Copyrighted by Harris & Ewing, Washington



**MAJOR CHARLES E. HUGHES, JR., AND HIS FAMILY**  
Major Hughes, son of Ex-Justice Hughes of the United States Supreme Court, has been serving as an instructor in an artillery school in France  
From a copyrighted photograph by W. B. Ritch, New York

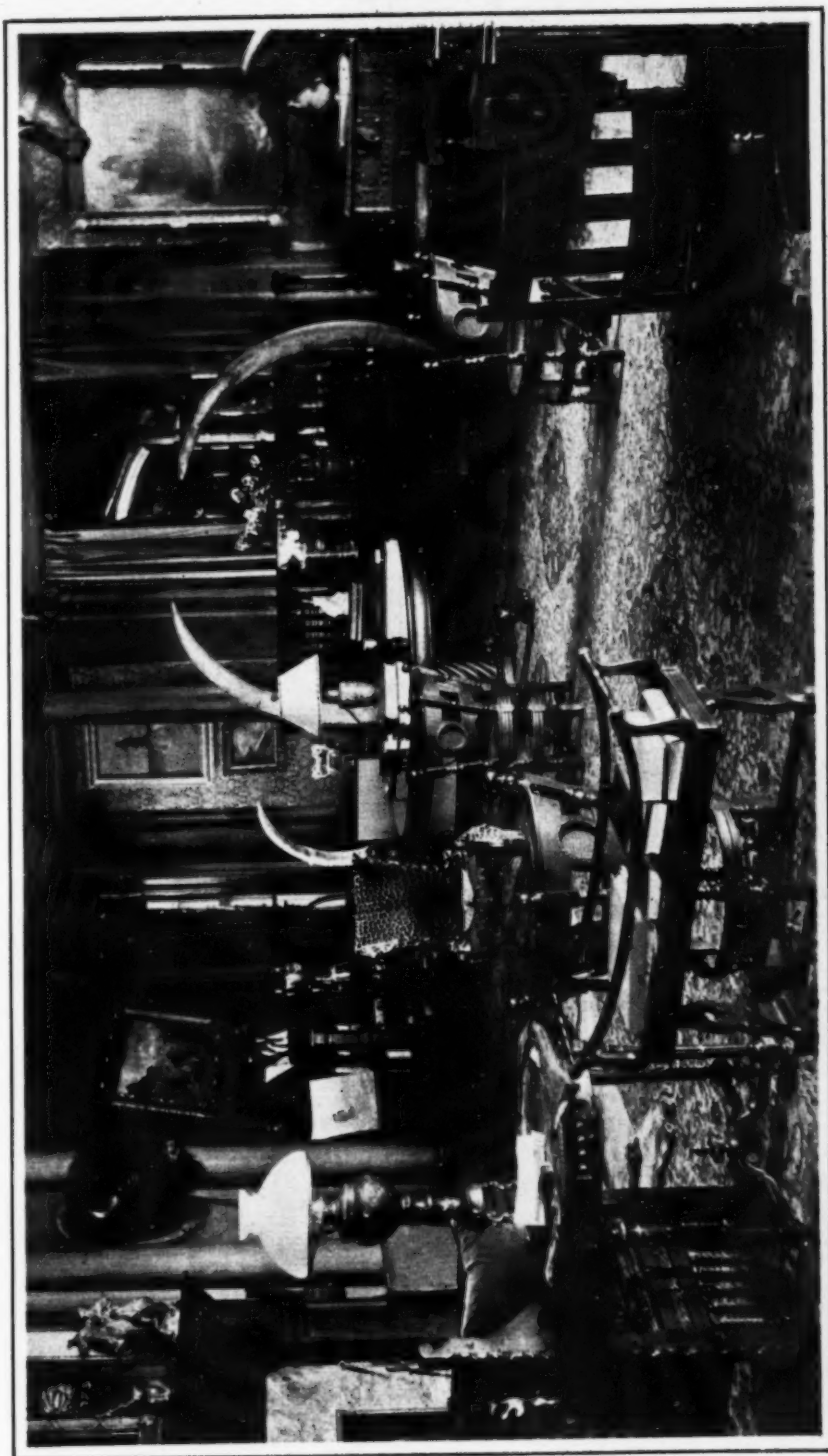


**MAJOR-GENERAL TOWNSEND AND HIS DAUGHTER**  
General Townsend, the defender of Kut, for two years held prisoner by the Turks, was released by Turkey's surrender, which he helped to negotiate  
From a copyrighted photograph by the Western Newspaper Union, New York



THE RECEPTION-ROOM AT SAGAMORE HILL.

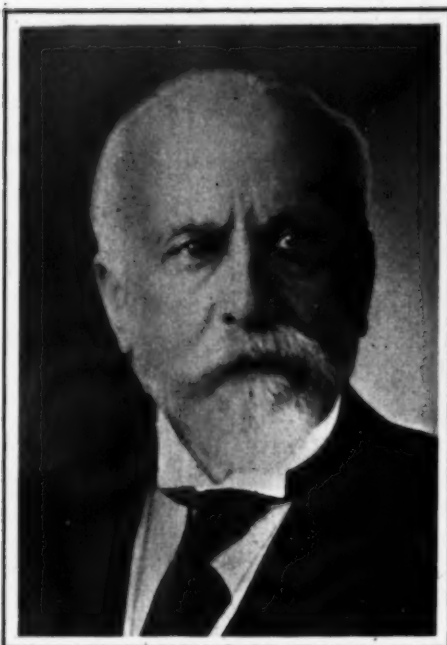
One of the principal rooms in Ex-President Roosevelt's home at Oyster Bay, characteristically adorned with heads of big game and fine bearskin and zebra rugs.  
From a copyrighted photograph by Paul Thompson, New York



THE TROPHY-ROOM AT SAGAMORE HILL

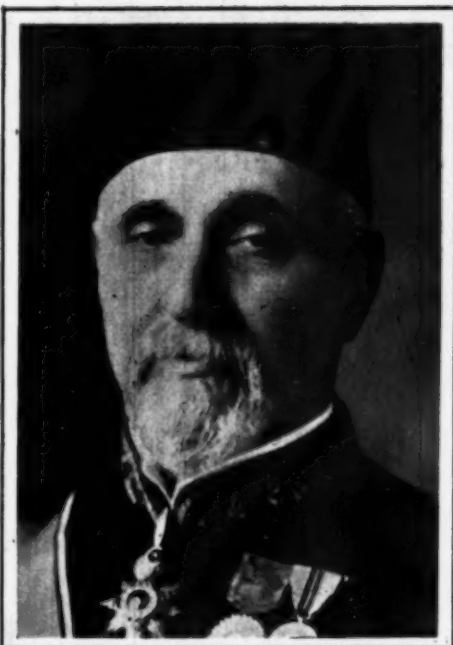
The largest room in Ex-President Roosevelt's home at Oyster Bay, among the contents of which are some of the spoils of his hunting expeditions in many parts of the world

From a copyrighted photograph by Paul Thompson, New York



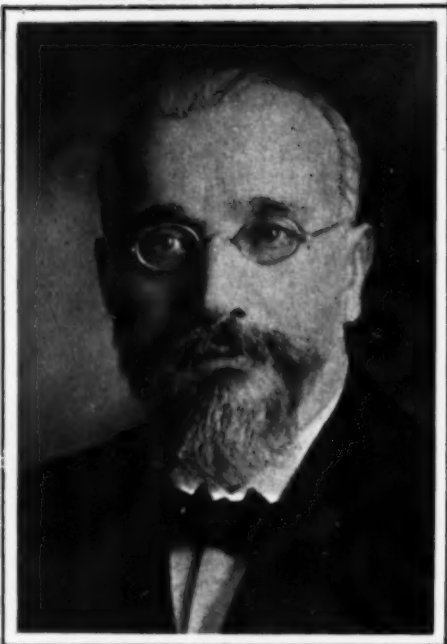
**THE NEW PRESIDENT OF SWITZERLAND**

Gustave Ador, who is also president of the International Committee of the Red Cross



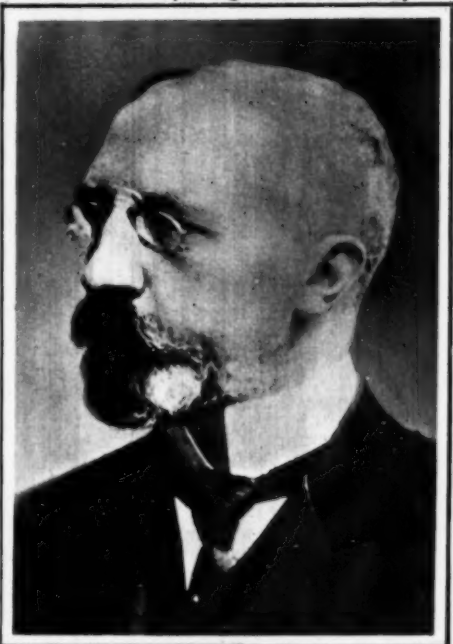
**THE NEW GRAND VIZIER OF TURKEY**

Tewfik Pasha, leader of the movement against the Pro-German clique long dominant in Turkey



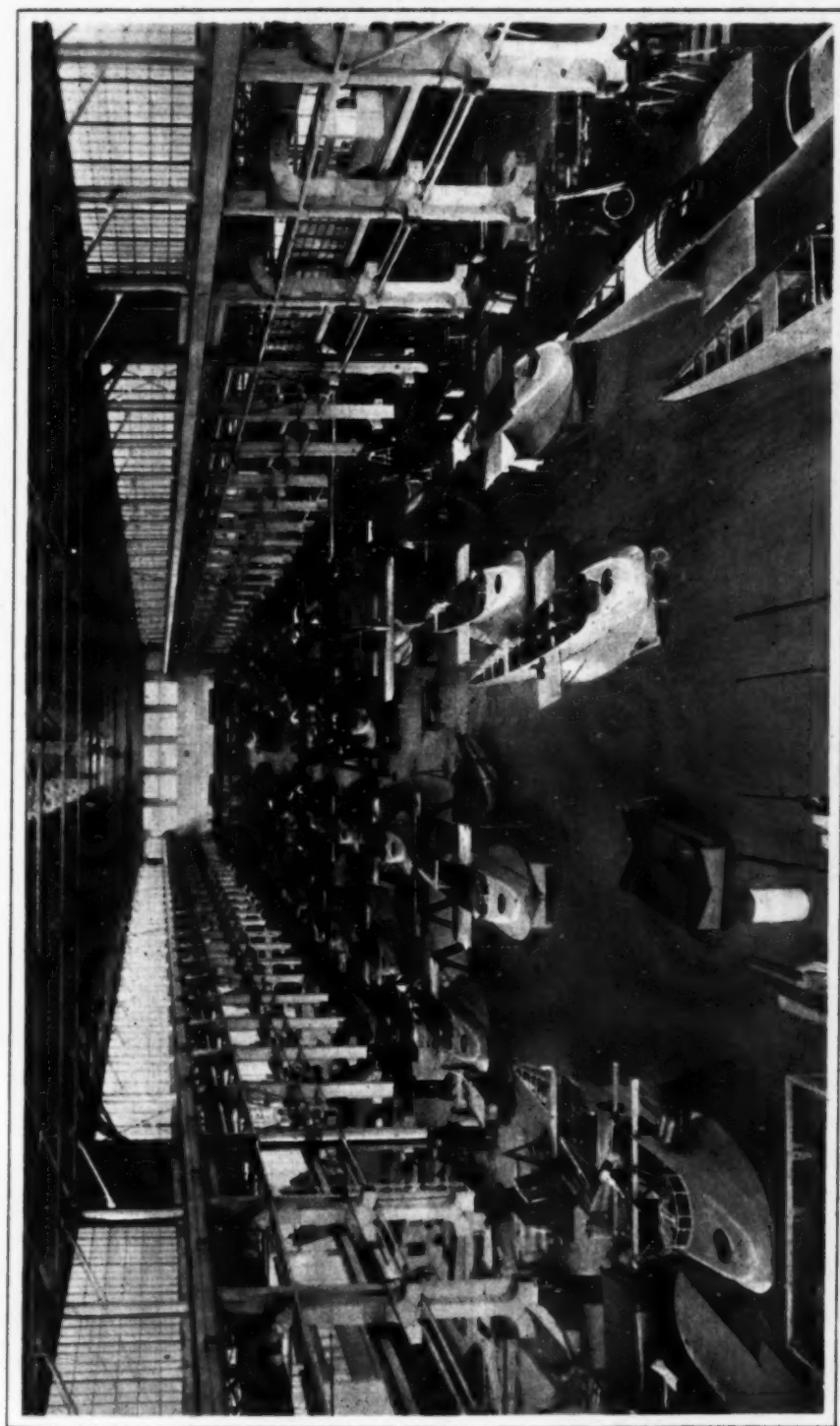
**PREMIER VENIZELOS OF GREECE**

The Cretan lawyer who has proved himself the leading statesman of southeastern Europe



**THE FIRST HEAD OF REPUBLICAN GERMANY**

Friedrich Ebert, who became provisional premier when the imperial government fell



A SCENE IN THE AERO STATION OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY, IN PHILADELPHIA

This picture, showing scores of flying boats in process of manufacture, gives an idea of the magnitude of the aviation department developed by our navy during the war



**WANTON DESTRUCTION FOR WHICH GERMANY WILL HAVE TO PAY**

Machinery in a linen-mill at Lille deliberately wrecked by the Germans before they evacuated the city

From a British official photograph



**ONE OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY'S GREAT SQUADRONS OF MOTOR-TRUCKS**

This shows a long line of trucks coming from the special repair-shop at Camp Holabird, Maryland

From a copyrighted photograph by the International Film Service, New York

# A League of Nations—Its Problems and Possibilities

THE STORY OF PAST EFFORTS TO FORM SUCH AN ORGANIZATION, AND THE MOVEMENT FOR THE CREATION, AS PART OF THE PRESENT PEACE SETTLEMENT, OF AN INTERNATIONAL BODY TO PREVENT FUTURE WARS

By Frederic Austin Ogg

Professor of Political Science in the University of Wisconsin

Nothing in this article must be considered as committing *MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE* to any particular attitude in regard to the many debatable points of the proposal for a league of nations. Mr. Munsey's own views on the subject have been expressed in the editorial columns of the *New York Sun*.

—The Editor.

**F**OUR years ago the most eminent of living German historians, Professor Eduard Meyer, of Berlin, made the following unpleasant prediction:

A series of long and sanguinary wars will mark the century upon which we have entered. . . . The era of internationalism is past and will never return. It will be replaced by a period of vigorous and ruthless assertion of national ambition—the struggle of the nations with one another.

Since these gloomy words were written, America and her brave cobelligerents have taken the first big step toward proving the falseness of Professor Meyer's prediction by administering a thoroughgoing defeat to the nation most likely to be responsible for "long and sanguinary wars." And more recently these same nations have been bending their best effort to such a reorganization of the world as will make it forever impossible for the learned prophet's forecast to be realized.

Plans for the desired reorganization have been multifold; never before have the best brains of the world been employed so generally upon a single problem. But practically all the schemes that have been brought forward have this in common, that they involve some kind of permanent association of states to see that justice is done and, so far as is possible, to maintain peace. In

other words, they contemplate a league of nations.

The idea of a league of nations is in no wise new. Europe's pathway has for a long time been strewn with the wreckage of plans and experiments based upon the principle. And the nature and difficulty of the present problem will be comprehended only in proportion as its historical setting is borne in mind.

In the first place, it is to be observed that the problem is peculiarly a modern one. The Roman world was organized under one incomparably powerful and dominant state. In the Middle Ages the two great controlling institutions, the Holy Roman Empire and the Christian church, were similarly grounded upon the idea of world unity. Nations in the modern sense were forming, but they were still more or less definitely linked up under the guise of world empire or world church.

In modern times, however, European society disintegrated into distinct, self-conscious, and rival national bodies. The process was helped on by the Renaissance, whose whole political influence was cast on the side of individualism and independence. It was furthered also by the Protestant revolt, which rent the seamless garment of the universal church and deprived Europe

as a whole of the last surviving organic expression of its unity.

#### THE RISE OF NATIONALISM

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the sense of national separation continued to grow, notably in England, France, Prussia, and Russia; and in the nineteenth century the desire for autonomy and self-subsistence became a universal passion. Between 1820 and 1878 the nationalist spirit gave Belgium her independence, created united Italy, erected the German Empire, set up a cluster of free states in the Balkans—in short, remade the map of central Europe.

Nationalism has thus laid firm hold upon the European world, and for a hundred years has swept opposition powerfully before it. Among increasing numbers of people it has of late been regarded as axiomatic that every nationality, just because it is a nationality, has an inherent right to be united and to be free.

The principle will, and should, win new triumphs as a result of the late war. From it have accrued many benefits; and it is never to be forgotten that there must first be nationalism before there can be the internationalism which a large part of the world professes to desire.

None the less, nationalism in practise has proved by no means an unmixed blessing. It has tended to a narrowing of views and of ideals, to an intolerance of everything that is "alien," and to an emphasis upon unity which easily becomes a glorification of mere uniformity.

The main count in the indictment against it, however, is that it accentuates rivalries and animosities, and breeds wars. Every state—whether or not, properly speaking, a nationality—becomes self-conscious and, so far as possible, self-contained. It seeks to play a rôle commensurate with what it conceives to be its true worth and strength. It reaches out for markets and for new territory. It grows distrustful of its neighbors, and seeks to circumvent them. It builds up alliances, and arms itself to the teeth. It expects war, and not infrequently gets it.

The dangers inherent in nationalism, when carried to its logical conclusion, early became apparent. Hence we find, beginning hundreds of years ago, a remarkable series of efforts and proposals looking to the counterbalancing of the nationalistic

system by a scheme of internationalism which would restore, on an entirely different basis, but with somewhat the same result, the unity and harmony presumably lost with the disappearance of medieval cosmopolitanism.

#### EARLY PLANS FOR A LEAGUE OF NATIONS

One line of solution was the building up of the modern system of international law, designed to regulate the relations of independent and rival nations in the interest of justice and peace. A second was the discussion of plans of world federation, conceived as a means of strengthening and extending international law and of giving it what it has usually lacked—authority, with a backing of concerted force.

The earliest known advocate of a league of nations was a certain Pierre Dubois, an *avocat royal* living in Normandy about 1300. This worthy man was accustomed, as his modern French biographer puts it, to "caress" vast projects of social reform. One of these projects was a scheme for international arbitration, to be carried out by a federation of nations under the leadership of France, and through the instrumentality of a court of nine arbitrators freshly constituted for each case, with appeal to the Pope. One is hardly surprised at the honest Pierre's lament that he could not get people to appreciate his ideas.

Near the close of the sixteenth century the Duc de Sully, the great minister of Henry IV of France, drew up a "grand design" for a "Christian republic" composed of fifteen autonomous European states, which were to pledge themselves to refer all questions of an international character to a common council, and to wage no wars except for the expulsion of the Turks from Europe. The scheme was frankly idealistic, and no effort was ever made to put it into effect.

A hundred years later a plan was proposed in which America may take a certain amount of pride; for its author was William Penn. For a generation all western Europe had suffered from the wars of Louis XIV, and in 1693 Penn published a trenchant "Essay toward the Present and Future Peace of Europe," in which he suggested a general European parliament, whose decisions should be enforced upon a recalcitrant state by joint action of all other states represented. Quaker though he was, Penn

was prepared to counsel war as a means of preventing war. His treatise is one of the ablest arguments for peace, and for international organization to enforce peace, that we have. It seems, however, to have attracted little notice at the time.

Another plan was put forward at the close of the War of the Spanish Succession by Charles de Saint-Pierre, a priest who served as secretary to the French plenipotentiary at the Congress of Utrecht in 1713. What Saint-Pierre proposed was no mere understanding among nations, but a strong international government. There was to be a perpetual alliance of the principal states, and a diet of plenipotentiaries, with full power to levy taxes, to make laws, and to enforce decisions by resort to arms. Throughout the eighteenth century this scheme, while commonly considered impracticable, was widely discussed. Both Voltaire and Rousseau wrote essays indorsing it.

The closing years of the century were prolific of peace literature. In England, Jeremy Bentham advocated a league of states, with a legislature and courts of justice, although the enforcement of decisions was to be left to public opinion; and Adam Smith propounded principles whose tendency would have been to transform Europe into a group of friendly economic units. In France a circle of *économistes*, ably led by Turgot, lent their influence to the same sort of doctrine; and in Germany both Lessing and Kant made important contributions.

In his tract "Zum Ewigen Frieden" ("Toward Lasting Peace"), published in 1795, the great Königsberg philosopher outlined a league of nations, to be fully equipped with powers of enforcement and with both judicial and administrative machinery. He saw no hope of enduring peace so long as Europe was governed by absolute princes; hence he proposed that the league should be restricted to republican states. The scheme was received as only the vagary of a closet philosopher, and the Prussian governing class took much more kindly to the message of Kant's younger contemporary, Hegel, who taught that war burns away moral excrescences, purifies social health, and stimulates the growth of manly virtue.

The first head of a great state to propose an organization of nations to maintain peace was Alexander I of Russia. Na-

poleon, indeed, is reported to have drawn up a plan for a "European association"; but no knowledge of it reached the world until after Waterloo, and it is altogether probable that the scheme was really an afterthought designed to aid in building up a Napoleonic legend of liberalism and benevolence.

#### THE DREAMS OF CZAR ALEXANDER I

Alexander came to the throne in 1801 as a liberal and a lover of peace, and to him it fell to become the motive power of the most remarkable attempt to create a federation of Europe prior to that which we are to-day witnessing. In 1804 he submitted to the younger Pitt a somewhat vague plan for a league of nations, to be carried into effect as soon as Napoleon should have been overthrown. The English statesman's reply was cautious, and ten years of war and of tangled diplomacy rolled by before opportunity came to attempt the desired reconstruction.

At the Congress of Vienna, in 1814-1815, the Czar used his influence consistently for a plan of federation, and he was duped by cleverer statesmen into thinking that his hopes were about to be realized. Two new international affiliations, indeed, came upon the scene at this point; but one, the Holy Alliance—joined by all the states of Europe except Great Britain, Turkey, and the Papal States—was from the outset entirely useless, a mere piece of "sublime mysticism and nonsense." The other, the Quadruple Alliance, proved only a very partial solution of the problem which the imperial peacemaker had in mind.

Something, however, must be said about this second alliance, because, after all, it constituted the closest approach to a league of nations that Europe has yet known. It began as an alliance of Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, and Russia, and had as its immediate objects the enforcement of the treaty just made with France and joint action to repress France in case she should again disturb the peace. Its organ of common action was a congress of the powers, to be assembled as need arose; and meetings were held at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818, at Troppau in 1820, at Laibach in 1821, and at Verona in 1822.

At the first of these gatherings France, having settled down to an orderly existence under the restored Bourbons, was admitted to the group. On the other hand, Great

Britain, finding the policy of the alliance in most respects reactionary, fell into the habit of giving or withholding support at her own pleasure.

#### THE CONCERT OF THE POWERS

Gradually the formal bonds of the alliance were relaxed all round; yet, under the newer name of "concert of the powers," the group survived as a working combination until the nineteenth century was far advanced. For decades a league of nations to preserve peace seemed an accomplished fact.

Without doubt, much of the credit for giving Europe a longer period of continuous peace after 1815 than she had enjoyed since the fifteenth century belongs to the concert of the powers. None the less, the arrangement finally proved a failure, for four main reasons:

First, the combination was one of princes, with a view chiefly to personal and dynastic ends.

Second, its activities were quickly diverted to the suppression of liberalism in central and southern Europe, so that what pretended to be a league of princes to preserve peace became a league of despots to make combined resistance against the democratic impulse.

Third, it took no account of the national aspirations of subject peoples.

Fourth, no provision was made for the revision of the agreements on which the system rested.

In the third quarter of the century there came a series of wars—the Crimean War, the wars of Italian liberation, the wars of Prussia with Denmark, Austria, and France, and the Russo-Turkish War—which not only reconstructed the map of Europe, but put an entirely different face on the international situation. In a manner, the concert continued until the Congress of Berlin in 1878; but thereafter the great nations could no longer even pretend to act together. General congresses for the settlement of international affairs became fewer, and finally ceased.

#### TWO HOSTILE GROUPS OF POWERS

Once more the ruling principle became, as in the eighteenth century, the "balance of power." On the one hand, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy drew together in the Triple Alliance; on the other, France and Russia entered into a Dual Alliance,

which in 1904-1907 became a Triple Entente through the adhesion of Great Britain. These alignments were formed under no urgent necessity, in times of no peculiar unsettlement or stress. They were not emergency measures, to be abandoned when the special need disappeared. On the contrary, they were built up slowly and deliberately, and were intended to be permanent.

The effect was the negation of everything that internationalism implies. The concert was a weak instrumentality of international concord; but at least it had the merit of seeking to hold all the great nations in one group, so that all might discuss and decide and act together. The balance of power assumed that unity of international action was impossible or undesirable, and deliberately substituted a system under which one great group of powers was set squarely over against another.

Formerly a dispute between two states was the signal for a general European congress, which became for the time a crude sort of international tribunal. Now a dispute was the occasion for separate consultation by the two mutually distrustful groups, with a probability of feverish military preparations.

For twenty years, jealous-eyed alliances, competitive armaments, hot contests for territories and for markets, increasing racial hostilities, admonished those who had eyes to see that Europe was rushing straight in the direction of a new and a greater cataclysm of blood. Heroic effort was made to stave off the catastrophe; and for some time it seemed that the closer economic interrelations of peoples, together with growing community of thought and action on political, educational, philanthropic, religious, and scientific lines, and a general development of "international-mindedness," would make great wars among the civilized nations forever impossible.

These favoring conditions were powerfully reenforced, in later years, by systematic propaganda designed to create public sentiment opposed to war, by great international congresses—at The Hague and elsewhere—for the codification and expansion of international law, by the more general resort to international arbitration, and by the setting up of a certain amount of machinery of international government, notably the court established at The Hague in 1899.

But all was in vain. The cataclysm came; and now not Europe alone, but the whole world, returns to the old problem of organizing peace. Confronted with colossal tasks of national and international reconstruction, men are fast coming to certain fundamental convictions about the future world order.

One of them is that the nations must not be allowed to fall apart again and, for purposes either of aggrandizement or of protection, to enter fresh leagues grounded in suspicion and hate.

A second conviction is that peace and justice are hereafter to be assured only through a return to the principle—although not the form or spirit—of the early nineteenth-century concert.

A third conviction is that this new international affiliation must be no mere league with functions limited to discussion and advice, but must be, rather, a close and durable federation, endowed with powers of punishment and compulsion, and equipped with machinery of legislation, administration, and justice. In short, it must be a *government*.

No one denies that this is a program which bristles with difficulties. How shall the new partnership be established? How many, and what, states shall be admitted to it? Shall Germany be received as a member? How broad shall be the federation's field of action? How can a state enter the league without impairing its sovereignty, and can—or ought—a state to be expected to make such a sacrifice? What machinery shall be set up? How shall a recalcitrant state be dealt with? What shall be done with armaments? What with tariffs and other economic policies?

These are weighty problems; yet they are largely of a kind with the problems that confronted the founders of our own American national government a hundred and thirty-two years ago. Even within the international domain there are working agreements which testify forcefully to the possibilities of the federal principle. The Pan-American Union, working through its periodic conferences and its administrative board at Washington, representing twenty states, is a case in point. Indeed, the so-called British Empire is itself in reality a great league of self-governing states.

Furthermore, at the close of the late war there actually existed a league of twenty-three civilized nations—the nations whose

combined efforts carried the battle for democracy to a victorious conclusion. This league was bound together by no constitution and by no written treaties, and its members were free to withdraw at any time. Russia, indeed, had withdrawn voluntarily, Rumania under compulsion. But years of common labor and sacrifice had taught the members of the group to act together for great ends, and had put them in a frame of mind such as to make the formation of a permanent league easier than it would ever have been before, or might ever be again.

#### RECENT STEPS TOWARD A LEAGUE

Until 1914, discussion of a league of nations proceeded largely on academic lines. Since then it has taken on a very practical character, and in both Europe and America influential organizations have sprung up to propagate the cause. The oldest and best-known of these organizations in America is the League to Enforce Peace, whose executive head is Ex-President Taft. Another is the League of Free Nations Association, recently established in New York.

The United States, indeed, has been a leader in the consideration of the problem. As early as August, 1916, Congress, by joint resolution, requested the President to call a conference of nations at the close of the war to discuss disarmament, arbitration, and other means of avoiding future conflicts. In his celebrated address to Congress, January 8, 1918, in which American war aims were for the first time definitely enumerated in some detail, President Wilson named as one of his "fourteen points" the formation of a general association of nations "under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike."

In an address delivered in the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, last September, the President further raised the question whether "the assertion of right" after the war should be "haphazard and by casual alliance," or whether there should be "a common concert to oblige the observance of common rights"; and in reply he declared unequivocally for a league of nations which should be "a part, and in a sense the most essential part, of the peace settlement itself."

Already most public men of Europe were on record in favor of the plan. In England,

the premier, Mr. Lloyd George, and the foreign minister, Mr. Balfour, had pledged their unreserved support; in its memorandum on war aims the Labor party had declared a "supernational authority, or league of nations," a necessary part of the coming peace; and a long list of leaders in the nation's thought and life had subscribed to the scheme and were working diligently to promote its realization.

The statesmen of France had had less to say. The Socialist congress had given its assent, but the government had taken no stand on the question, and the press had voiced a feeling that the nation should not enter any international combination in which Germany or anything German should have a place. More recently, however, the premier, M. Clémenceau, has indorsed the principle of the proposal without any reservation. Statesmen of Italy, of Japan, and of Germany itself, had already spoken out strongly for the league.

Out of tireless discussion have come numerous specific plans. They cannot be considered in detail here; but upon certain main features there is substantial though not universal agreement.

#### THE CARDINAL POINTS OF THE PLAN

First, that, as President Wilson, Lord Grey of Falloden, and other leaders have asserted, the league should be a part of the peace settlement itself. The present opportunity is wholly exceptional, and, once lost, is likely never to recur. Besides, the territorial and economic readjustments which must be made will be more likely to be equitable and durable if the nations have first given proof of their faith in one another by joining in the league.

Second, that the supreme objects of the league should be the protection of the lawful interests of its members, and, in general, the enforcement of international justice. There is every reason to suppose that this would mean the promotion of world peace; but security and justice should be the first considerations.

Third, that, therefore, while the league should make it possible for armaments, and expenditures on armaments, to be reduced, it should aim not so much at a general relinquishment of arms as at a combination of them for the common good. "The League of Nations," says a recently framed platform, "is not an alternative to the use of force, but the organization of force to

the end that it may be effective for our common protection."

Fourth, that at the outset the membership of the league should be confined to a few leading nations—to nations that are democracies, and to such as have borne a large share of the burden of the late war against autocracy. The "charter members" might well be Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, and the United States. Germany and Austria might in time be admitted, but not until they have given evidence of being wholly purged of autocratic and militaristic domination. It would be well if eventually all free states could be drawn into the combination, though at the beginning this would result in an unwieldiness that would probably be fatal.

Fifth, that the league should be endowed with real power. Many reformers shrink from this. Bentham did so a century and a quarter ago; William J. Bryan and his school have done so in our day. But unless the point is conceded, it is useless to pursue the plan. Conference, discussion, arbitration, moral appeal—all are good; but they do not meet the situation in which the peoples of the earth now find themselves. There must be somewhere an agency with power to compel respect for law and obedience to it. The League to Enforce Peace demands, as a minimum, that the league of nations shall have power to punish, by both economic and military means, any member that refuses to submit its controversies to the proper agency of adjudication.

Sixth, that the members of the league, while as a matter of course retaining their essentially independent character, must be prepared to accept certain limitations upon what they have been accustomed to regard as their sovereign rights. Otherwise, the league can be no more than a rope of sand.

Seventh, that the league must have machinery through which to accomplish its ends. The platform of the League to Enforce Peace calls for at least three main organs. The first of these is a court of arbitration, either that already created at The Hague or one freshly constituted, to hear justiciable cases—that is, such as are capable of settlement under existing rules of international law. The second is a council of inquiry and conciliation, to consider non-justiciable disputes; and the third, a conference, or parliament, composed of representatives of the signatory powers, to formulate and codify rules of

international law. Some advocates of the plan propose, too, a standing administrative council, to prepare measures for consideration by the lawmaking body, to carry out decisions of that body, and to protect the interests of backward nations and subject peoples.

Eighth, that this organization must be worked out and maintained on a strictly democratic basis. No immense bureaucratic union of governments will serve the purpose. There must be substantial publicity of proceedings; and the executive and legislative bodies must be so constituted as to be representative of the several peoples, and of the great groups and parties into which these peoples are divided.

Ninth, that leagues or alliances, and special covenants or understandings, within the general and common family of the league, must be prohibited. In particular, as President Wilson has urged, there must be "no special, selfish economic combinations within the league, and no employment of any form of boycott or exclusion except as the power of economic penalty by exclusion from the markets of the world may be vested by the league itself as a means of discipline and control." This does not at all imply universal free trade. It means simply that tariffs should not be discriminatory as between members of the league.

#### WHAT OF OUR TRADITIONAL POLICY?

To the long list of practical problems raised by the proposal to establish a league of nations must be added, in the case of the United States, the query which troubles many—what is to become of our historic and revered policy of national isolation?

On the floor of the Senate it was recently declared by a member of the President's own party that any plan which would cause the United States to renounce its ancient policy, and to become entangled in European broils, was "the most monstrous doctrine ever proposed in this republic"; and the affirmation roused a good deal of favorable comment both within and without the chamber.

Let it be conceded that entrance into a league of nations would mean for the United States a complete abandonment of her traditional policy. There are, however, two cardinal facts to be observed.

The first is that already, during the war, this country has given up the policy of isolation and has acted in substantial alli-

ance with the nations fighting the Central Powers. Not only was the United States really an ally of the other nations; she took the initiative in making the general alliance stronger through a united command and in numerous other ways.

In the second place, even if we had not already abandoned our isolation, the new world order would sooner or later have compelled us to do so. Isolation was a natural, wise, and almost inevitable policy when the Atlantic was a great gulf between the Old World and the New; but in these days, when cables flash news instantly from one continent to another, when goods cross to England or France in a week, when the trade and the very life of every nation depend on materials drawn from other lands, when the United States has grown large and rich and strong, isolation is no longer possible. The world has become one great body, and neither the United States nor any other nation can live to itself or refuse to bear its share in the common tasks of civilization.

To enter a democratic league of free nations does not necessarily mean to be drawn into an "entangling alliance" of the kind which Washington wisely warned against. If such a compact can be framed, adhesion to it would mean, rather, to gain fresh insurance against war, to escape from the necessity of maintaining a huge army and navy, and, above all, to take up in a manner befitting our strength, resources, and lofty ideals the common task of maintaining throughout the world those conditions of justice and peace which are essential to the progress of the race.

No sane man expects a league of nations to usher in the millennium. No one expects it to end all war. No one supposes that it would be free from difficulties and drawbacks. But there is one powerful argument in its favor—that the only alternative is a reversion to the balance of power, the régime of alliances and counter-alliances, of competitive armament, of secret diplomacy, of international rivalry, jealousy, suspicion, and fear, with all the accompanying train of evils.

The difficulties of the problem are great and may prove insuperable, but the United States cannot afford to be responsible before God and man for interposing any obstacle to a trial of the new plan, to the fresh start in international relationships for which the world at large ardently longs.

# A Vast Reserve of Oil

IN SPITE OF THE PROVERB ABOUT THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF GETTING BLOOD FROM  
A STONE, OUR SHALE ROCKS MAY YIELD US A VITAL FLUID  
OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

By Robert G. Skerrett

**M**OSES performed a miracle, in the eyes of the children of Israel, when he tapped the rocks of Kadesh for water. But our scientists, to the automotive world, have achieved a far greater wonder, for they have discovered where we can draw an almost boundless measure of oil from stone.

Strange as it may seem, this hitherto untouched source of supply is not hidden far beneath our feet, but rises high above our heads in towering mountain formations. In the past, we have drilled into the bowels of the earth to tap rich subterranean stores of petroleum. Those hidden reservoirs are not inexhaustible; indeed, many authorities declare that our great and steadily increasing rate of consumption threatens to exceed the available supply within a comparatively few years.

When that happens, kerosene and gasoline may become dearer, but we shall not have to do without them. We can push confidently into the hillsides, knowing that we shall strike oil—not in the form of an oleaginous gusher or flood, but in the shape of a solid substance susceptible, when suitably treated, of giving an abundance of liquid fuel, motor spirit, and a variety of valuable by-products. The United States is fortunate in possessing far-flung strata of oil shales, which bulk all the way from outcropping ledges to the dignity of veritable mountains.

Oil shales have been found both in the West and in the East. Those tested in Colorado, Wyoming, Nevada, and Utah are conspicuously rich in their oily content, but in several Eastern States the so-called black shales have been proved to be well worth working. These shales extend from New York to Alabama, and westward to the Mississippi River.

According to the experts, the slates or shales would warrant mining and treating if they held as much as ten gallons per ton of stone. The layman must not conclude that they carry oil, as such, within them, ready to exude when the rock is broken or crushed. It is stored there as a solid, and can be released only by chemical reactions, which are promoted by the application of heat.

Fifty or sixty years ago, when Utah was explored and settled by the Mormons, those enterprising pioneers distilled oil from the native shales. Again, before petroleum was struck in Pennsylvania, there were in the Eastern States something like fifty small enterprises engaged in a modest way in extracting oil from our black slaty formations.

With the discovery of flowing wells of petroleum in Pennsylvania in 1859, the distillation of oil from shale was promptly abandoned, and, except as a matter of history, the practise ceased to be of interest in this country. Of course, it was easier and more profitable to bore into the ground and draw thousands of barrels of oil within a brief interval from a single lucky strike.

On the other hand, in Scotland, the shale-oil industry has flourished for the past seventy years. The Scottish oil-producers have gradually developed their processes and improved their methods of distillation until their annual output has reached a total of more than three hundred thousand tons. The shales of Scotland are Great Britain's only domestic source of mineral oil. It is understood that the Scottish distilleries have been of the greatest service during the war in supplying the oil-burning ships of Britain's navy, and thus saving a part of the high cost of carrying oil across the Atlantic from America.

What has been done abroad, then, under up-to-date conditions, is a good founda-

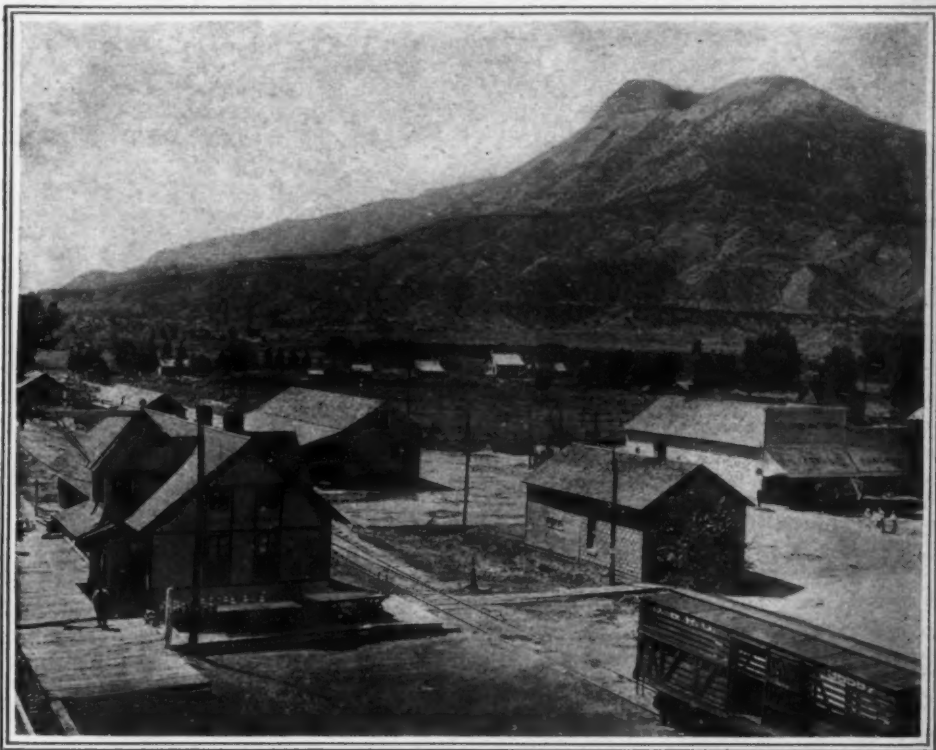
tion of commercial experience upon which we can build confidently. The Scottish shales have a mean yield of twenty-five gallons of oil per ton of rock, and the companies engaged in exploiting them are reported to have averaged, in recent years, an annual profit of about eighteen per cent. A great part of our oil shales are of far richer content, and it is believed that it will be possible, with the methods of extraction developed here by private enterprise and by the researches of the United States Geological Survey, to work to advantage even lower-grade shales, and to obtain a higher average yield of oil and of valuable by-products. The Western shales have given, by test, all the way from nine to ninety gallons of oil per ton of rock.

How did these shales become charged, as it were, with their valuable burden? This cannot be answered conclusively, but unquestionably the formations are akin to those of coal. In the Green River area of southwestern Wyoming and northeastern Utah, geologists have found ample proof

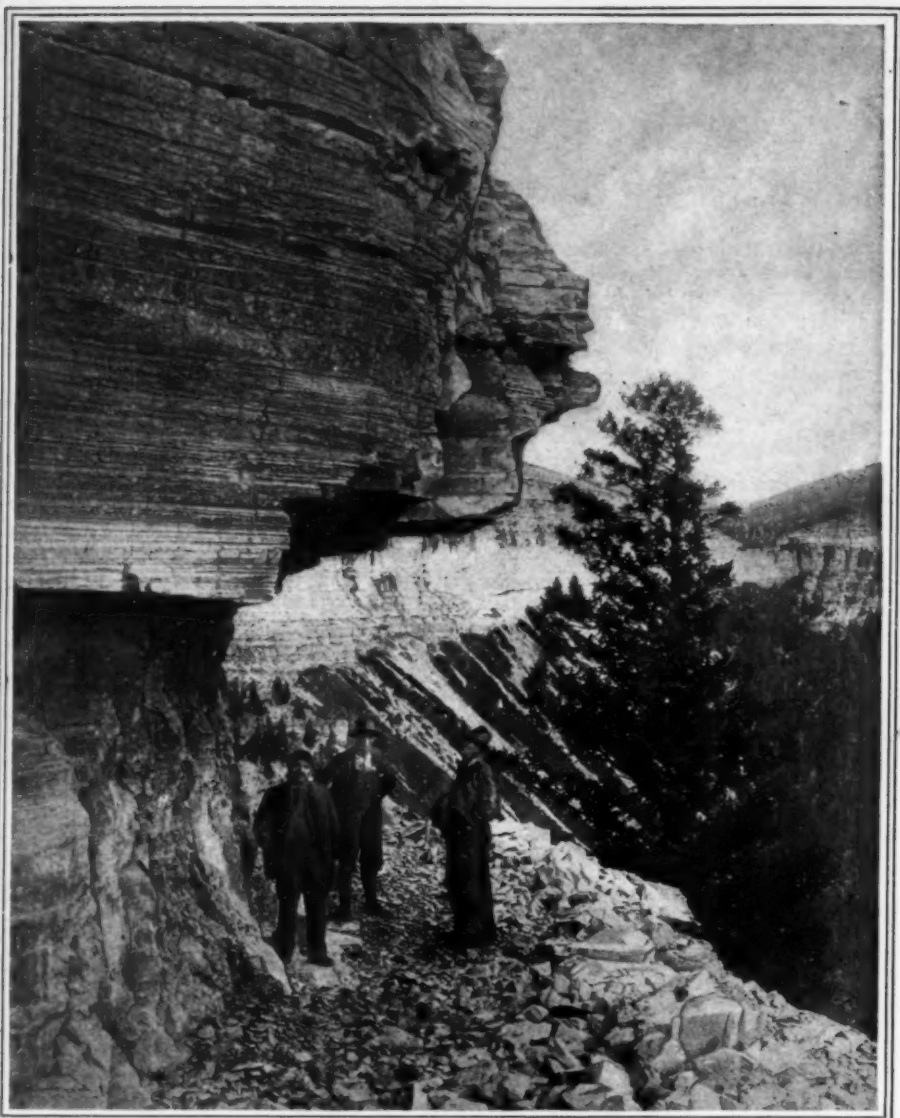
that the oil from the shale is obtained largely by the destructive distillation of the partly bitumenized vegetable matter held in the rock. Further, one of the experts of the United States Geological Survey says:

An examination of the shales of the Green River formation has shown that invariably the shale showing the larger percentage of vegetable debris will yield the most oil.

Just as great beds of luxuriant plant life accumulated in long-past ages were subjected to tremendous pressure and, incidentally, to great heat, and thus transformed into coal, kindred matter was metamorphosed in a more or less similar manner into the oily contents of our shales. As heat stored these products in the spongy rock, so high temperatures are now required to release them. There are two ways of doing this—one by the employment of steam, and the other, called dry distillation, where the slate is placed in suitable metallic retorts or chambers, and there subjected to a coking process through the external application of heat.



MOUNT CALLAHAN, IN THE GRAND RIVER VALLEY, WESTERN COLORADO, WHERE MILLIONS OF TONS OF OIL-BEARING SHALE LIE WITHIN EASY REACH OF A RAILROAD



A TYPICAL OUTCROP OF OIL-BEARING SHALE IN THE GRAND RIVER VALLEY, WESTERN COLORADO

In either case, the high temperature suffices to volatilize the oleaginous matter in the shale, and, agreeably to the degree of heat, the constituents are freed and recovered by condensation. Most of the oils obtained by the distillation of shale range, at ordinary temperatures, from a thick liquid to a semisolid, vaselinelike substance. By the application of different degrees of heat, the primary oil can be "cracked" or subjected to fractional distillation, and thus, successively, are ob-

tained gasoline, kerosene, asphalt, paraffin, sulfur, and nitrogen. The refining of shale oil, therefore, is a rather complicated process, as the oil must be distilled several times in order to separate its different ingredients.

In Scotland, the shale-oil distilleries recover sixteen different products from the shale—crude oil, sulfate of ammonia, chrysene, naphtha, motor spirit, gas oil, two grades of burning oil, light oil, blue oil, heavy oil, lubricating oil, paraffin wax, tar,

sulfuric acid, and coke. In addition, gas is given off during the treatment of the rock, most of which is used as fuel, thereby reducing the cost of furnishing heat for the various operations. The analyses of eighteen samples of shale from the Green River formation, each of which gave at the rate of fifteen gallons or more of oil to the ton, showed an average nitrogen content of 0.64 per cent, which is equivalent to 59.4 pounds of ammonium sulfate for every two thousand pounds of shale.

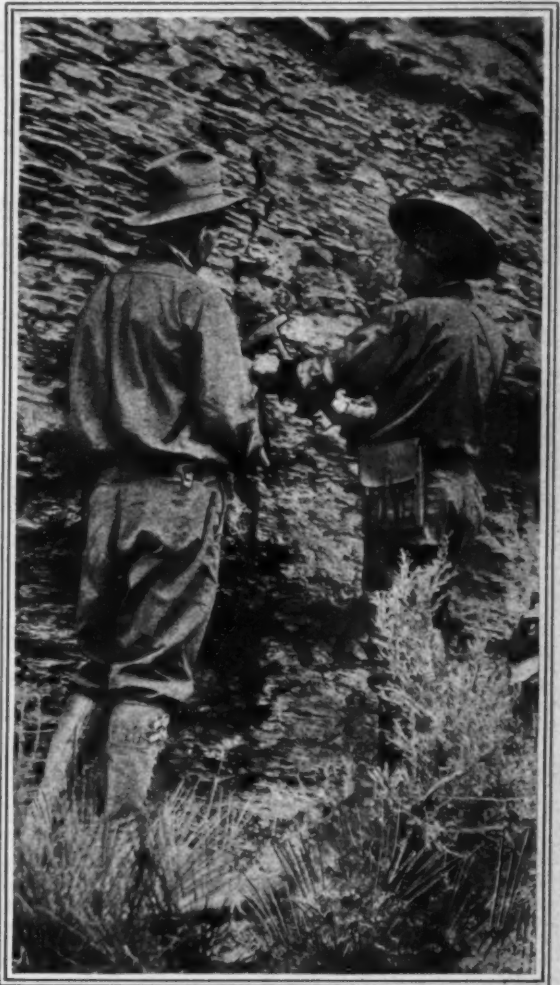
During the last two years nitrogen has been discussed early and late by both our popular and our technical press, because an adequate supply of nitrogen, in a variety of fixed forms, is practically indispensable to the waging of war, to agriculture, and to many of the industrial arts.

Therefore, our oil shales and their prospective wide utilization bear intimately upon many phases of our national welfare. Sulfate of ammonia is that form of nitrogen which is commonly worked into the artificial fertilizers used both in the United States and abroad; and without a sufficiency of this essential plant-food in the ground it is impossible to raise abundant and profitable crops of foodstuffs.

Samples of oil shales obtained in the Uinta Basin of northern Utah gave, when fractionated, the following results—gasoline, 7 to 12 per cent; kerosene, 28.5 to 49 per cent; asphalt, 0.47 to 4.10 per cent; paraffin, 1.63 to 9.21 per cent; sulfur, 0.41 to 1.42 per cent; and nitrogen, 0.88 to 2.19 per cent. The meaning of these figures will be further explained in a moment. A survey of that region indicates that the oil-shale beds cover an area at least forty miles wide and one hundred and twenty-five miles long. The depth of the strata can as yet be only approximated; but even so, it is estimated that the basin contains sufficient shale to produce at least forty-two billion barrels of crude oil, with something like five hundred million tons of ammonium sulfate as one of the by-products.

This outlook is certainly a heartening one, in view of the warnings that have been issued in regard to the threatened exhaustion of our oil-wells.

Since the discovery of petroleum in Pennsylvania, sixty years ago, there has been taken out of our various oil-fields, down to the end of 1918, a total of about four and one-half billion barrels. We have it on the authority of the Federal government that there now remain in the ground in the known fields, approximately seven billion barrels; and no small part of this quantity, unquestionably, is very far down and would entail unduly heavy outlays to effect its recovery. Under the circum-



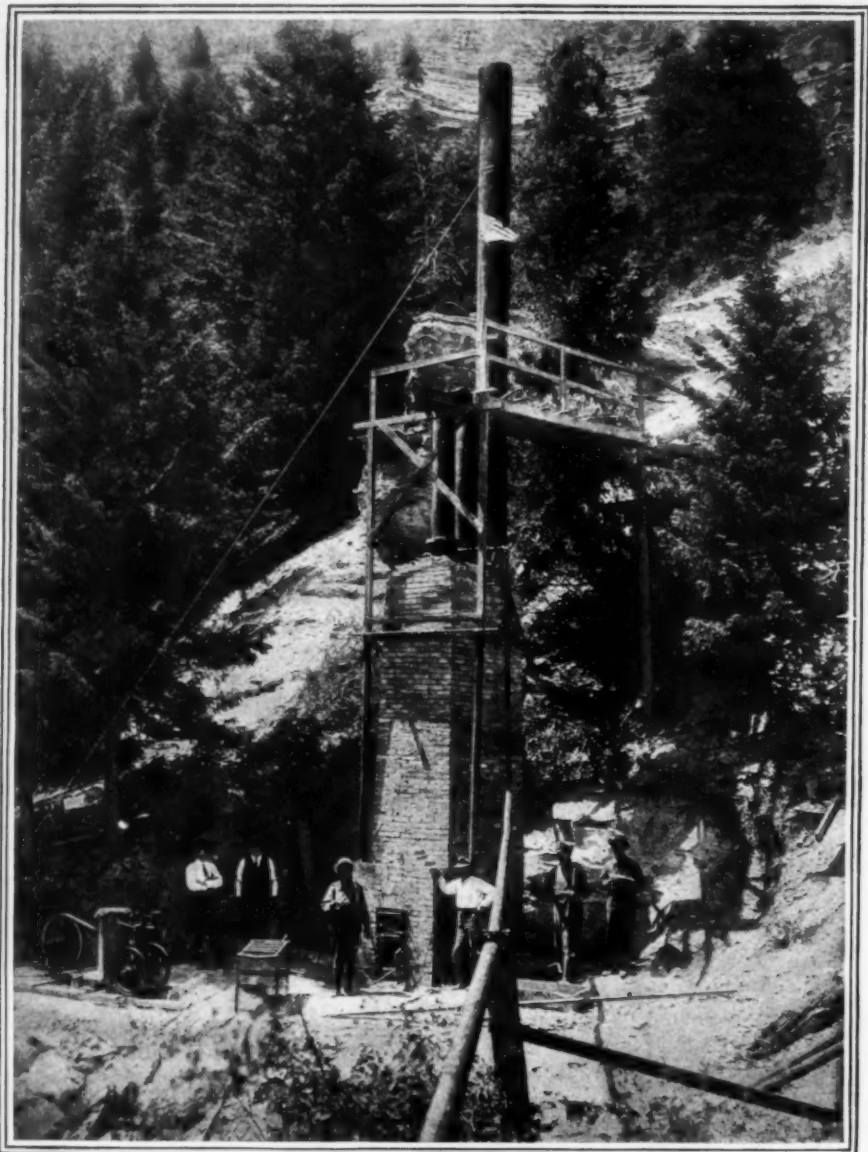
PROSPECTORS COLLECTING SPECIMENS OF OIL-BEARING SHALE FROM A LEDGE NEAR WATSON, UTAH

stances, our oil shales loom large not only as a means of relief, but perhaps, in the long run, as a cheaper source of mineral oil.

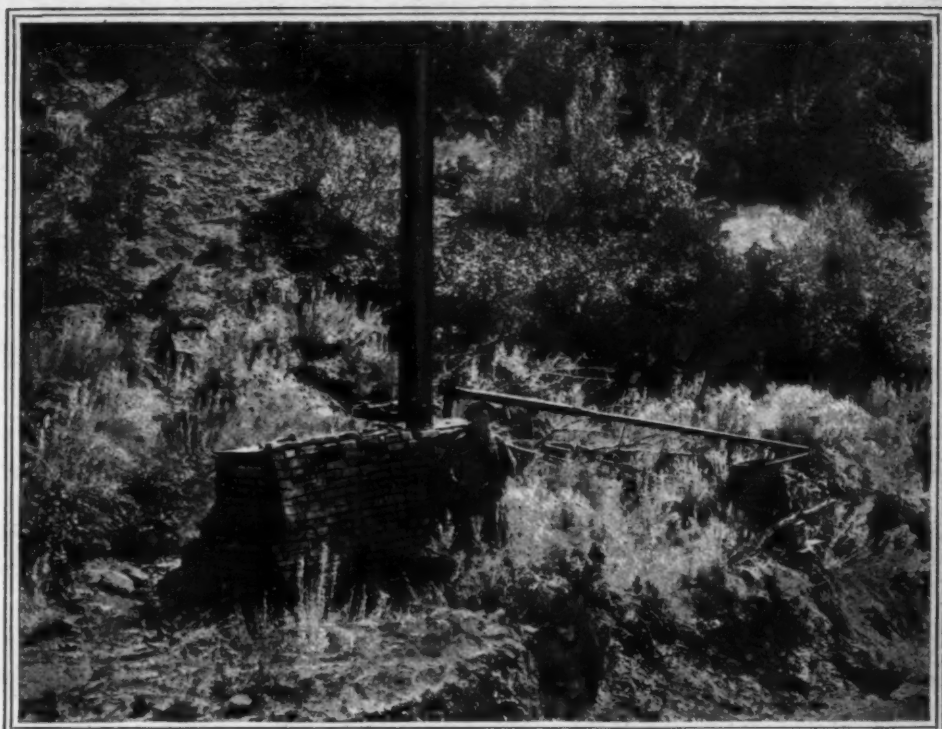
In the Grand River Valley of Colorado, along the main line of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, the shale formation covers a wide stretch, the most recent figures estimating its area at more than fifteen hundred square miles. Assuming a yield of not less

than thirty-six gallons of oil to a ton of rock, this would mean, per square mile, a content of twenty-four million barrels, or a total of thirty-six billion barrels for that region alone.

But it is not necessary for the whole country to go so far West to obtain oil shales that are well worth working. In southern Indiana the so-called New Albany



AN EXPERIMENTAL SHALE-OIL DISTILLERY NEAR DE BEQUE, IN THE GRAND RIVER VALLEY, COLORADO



A PRIMITIVE SHALE-OIL DISTILLERY NEAR JUAB, UTAH, BUILT AND USED BY MORMON SETTLERS ABOUT FIFTY YEARS AGO

shale runs one hundred feet in depth over an area of about sixteen thousand square miles. At the most moderate estimate, the average thickness of the oil-yielding rock cannot be less than thirty feet, and there is every reason to believe that it will be practicable to mine one-half of the stratum, or fifteen feet. Assuming fifteen cubic feet of rock to weigh one ton and to give only ten gallons of oil, the yield would be ten gallons for each square foot of the whole district. As a square mile contains in round figures twenty-eight million square feet, the output would be two hundred and eighty million gallons, or nearly seven million barrels, of oil from each square mile, making a total of more than one hundred billion barrels from the whole district.

In Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio, and elsewhere further to the southward, there are many out-croppings of black shale that promise to be of the utmost economic value in the years to come. In some sections the raw material can be mined by means of steam-shovels, but because of the toughness of the shale it will probably be necessary to

equip the excavators with special teeth of alloyed steel.

In some of our coal-fields there are beds of shale lying in contact with the coal so that in many cases it is impossible to mine the fuel without removing considerable quantities of the rock. The shale has hitherto been regarded as a waste product, but it is more than likely that this so-called refuse, like our culm piles, may ultimately be turned to good account in the production of oil, fuel gas, and various useful by-products.

There are to-day in the United States about five million passenger automobiles and nearly half a million commercial vehicles that make a continual demand for gasoline, and the number is being augmented at the rate of at least ten per cent per annum. Even so, though liquid fuel may rise in price, we need not fear an exhaustion of the supply. Our oil-bearing shales can be counted upon to keep us going long after our oil-fields have been drained dry of their subterranean stores of petroleum.

# The Jumping-Off Place

BY LOUISE KENNEDY MABIE

Illustrated by C. D. Williams

CIRCLING hills of red ore made Presaba's horizon, cramming it in until it could not see the world because so much of the county happened to be in the way. As a result, the town was invincibly local, and occasionally admitted it. Almost any citizen would agree with you that municipally Presaba was a two-spot, artistically a dump, potentially a trolley-station, and nationally a hole in the map—if you could listen while he told you that Stibbing was more so.

Strangers within the red hills were besought to drive over to Stibbing and look at it—nothing more. And then Presaba would point to its Enterprise Hotel—to the yellow brick façade and the foyer of imitation marble, to the palms about the cigar-stand, to the Mission dining-room with pink-shaded electric candles, and to the head waitress.

Most of all to the head waitress. As a New Yorker might indicate, deprecatingly, the Statue of Liberty, so Presaba indicated, undeprecatingly, the head waitress. From beginning simply as a peach, the head waitress at the Enterprise had become an institution.

Much of this was due to the tilt of the girl's powdered little nose; more to the straight way she had of looking a man between the eyes. A measure of her success should be put down to the clocks upon her neat silken ankles; a larger measure to the brains ticking away in her neat young head. But the town did not analyze. It did not care. It simply indicated Miss Gilsey as a crowning municipal asset, and rested its case.

"It says here that the French dames all gave up their summer furs last year to make ear-muffs for their poilus," remarked Miss Gilsey from the depths of a Chicago newspaper.

"Gee, what a woman won't do fer her dawg!" said Lil Kenney, yawning as she straightened a table-cloth.

"I don't think it was quite dawgs, kid," hesitated Miss Gilsey. "It was a new kind of a French pet that somebody invented. Shoes is to be lower in leather and higher in price. Serges is to be worn by whoever is strong enough to knock down the other women on the way to the department. And my serge looks like a tire that has bumped Stibbing's main street in the face too long! It's wilted. It's weary. Lil, I'm beginning to realize there's been a war on."

"Gladys seen a movie the other night where the Kaiser landed in New York and they copped him for a subway guard. Gladys says she was born to live in New York, where them dramatic things happen. Gladys says no dramatic thing ever happens here."

"Tell Gladys from me," said Miss Gilsey with hauteur, as she rose, "that some dramatic thing will happen here the next time she drops a platter of stuffed tomatoes. She's ruined Mr. Adelstone's striped suit, and Mac says the cleaning bill is on the house."

Whereupon, immaculate in white from her wide organdy collar to the heels of her slim pumps, with her hair brushed smoothly back from her forehead and draped into elaborate puffs over her ears, Miss Gilsey swung open the glass doors leading to the main office and took up her station in the doorway.

Mac, at the office desk, raised his head to cast a flying glance down the lobby, and then turned back to his work; but Miss Gilsey had caught the flying glance. It had been coming fairly regularly of late, and it always left behind it a pleasant little glow. For it was a concession from Mac to have him look at you even briefly.

The cigar-girl was shaking dice at the counter with a large person in a belted jacket and a sombrero. Miss Gilsey, idly watching, decided that the cigar-girl's new green waist would not stand washing, and that the large person did not seem at home in his sombrero.

Presently the large person left the cigar-counter and came in for his dinner. Miss Gilsey, pulling out his chair, unfolding his napkin, dropping before him a dinner-card, took stock of him as she stood at attention. But when the large person, who was bald and bearded as well, glanced suddenly up at her, she was gazing contemplatively over his head at the street beyond, wind-swept in cold sunshine.

"Steak—potatoes hashed, browned—tea—bread," ordered the large person.

Miss Gilsey, leaning ever so slightly forward, indicated a printed line upon the dinner-card.

"Bread is extra," she said crisply, "until they make the high sign from Washington."

The large person grunted.

"So?" said he. "Even in the jumping-off place?"

"Oh, we heard there was a war on," conceded Miss Gilsey languidly. "We got echoes, even if we didn't feel the draft."

"That is a joke?" inquired the large person.

"It might have been," said Miss Gilsey, "but it isn't."

"And why did you not feel the draft even in the jumping-off place?" continued the large person, who was singularly unsmiling.

"The ore had to go out, didn't it?" inquired Miss Gilsey, in turn. "Nothing has ever come along big enough to stop the ore from going out—regular. Wars, strikes, walking delegates in automobiles—the ore keeps right on going out—regular. It's going out now to rebuild the world," she added.

"You are a very smart young lady, hey?" said the large person.

"Very smart—but not too smart," conceded Miss Gilsey.

Afterward, standing in her doorway, Miss Gilsey decided that the large person was got up as a mining engineer. He had the clothes. He had the high-laced boots. He had the rough-and-ready look. He did not belong to the Six Mile open pit outfit, and he wasn't a Gulch man; but he might have driven over from Stibbing.

At this point Miss Gilsey interrupted herself to usher Mr. Adelstone in to his dinner. Mr. Adelstone was a millinery salesman from St. Louis.

"Wait till I show you a moment," said Mr. Adelstone, searching in an inner pocket. "My wife selling Liberty bonds in the last loan, even to bankers—my baby saluting the flag—in a Sunday edition! The man snapped them so quick as you could blink. Read what it says underneath—'Her father born within the Pale—Safe in the arms of Uncle Sam'!"

"Gee, but you got one great little patriotic family, Mr. Adelstone," said Miss Gilsey, leaning closer to look.

"Hush! Wait just one moment," said Mr. Adelstone hurriedly. "Who is the guy with the beard?"

"Search me," said Miss Gilsey quietly.

"Somewhere I have seen that guy with the beard," ruminated Mr. Adelstone. "My memory ain't so good now except for Paris hats already; but somewhere I have seen that guy with the beard—making up troubles."

"He's looking this way," murmured Miss Gilsey, straightening suddenly. "Did your suit get back yet from the cleaner's?" she asked rather loudly.

"The suit?" Mr. Adelstone waved it away. "What matters it a suit more or less, with business so good now the war is over? Grapefruit I take to begin with."

"Tell Louis this grapefruit order is for Mr. Adelstone, Gladys," warned Miss Gilsey. "Tell him to keep on cutting till he lands a good one."

"Such another saleswoman as my Sadie there is not in St. Louis," volunteered Mr. Adelstone.

"You picked a winner, Mr. Adelstone," said Miss Gilsey. "Pretty, too!"

"Pretty as a diamond," said Mr. Adelstone. "Crazy about me," he added.

"Well, why not?" said Miss Gilsey.

"You've said something!" agreed Mr. Adelstone superbly.

## II

WHEN she went back to her doorway, Miss Gilsey noticed that a strange young man in a belted jacket and high-laced boots was leaning over the cigar-stand, and that Effie was already interested; for her head tilted toward the strange young man as a sunflower tilts toward the sun. Effie was laughing when she was not smiling. To

the young man's confidential murmur she inclined a willing ear; and for a long time, as Miss Gilsey noted in the intervals of her work, two heads were very close together.

It happened that Miss Gilsey was swinging up the stretch of green Brussels when

spite of themselves, and lingered. "You do put one up well here, don't you—for a jumping-off place?" he added.

Miss Gilsey said afterward that it was at this particular point that she came out of her slumber. A chill, as she tersely expressed it, passing down her spine, met an-



THE CIGAR-GIRL WAS SHAKING DICE WITH A LARGE PERSON IN A BELTED JACKET AND A SOMBRERO

the strange young man at length left Effie, deposited his wide hat on the rack beside the door, and came in to his dinner. Inevitably he met Miss Gilsey squarely on the stretch of green Brussels. Inevitably he took in Miss Gilsey with one quick look. Inevitably Miss Gilsey took him in with another. Then she whirled about, ushered him to a table beside a window, pulled back his chair, and dropped a dinner-card before him.

"Er—" He hesitated. "Do you happen to have hot bouillon?"

Leaning ever so slightly forward, Miss Gilsey silently indicated a line upon the dinner-card.

"I see! Some of that, then," he ordered. "And Lake Superior whitefish, I think—with a salad." Glancing rapidly down the menu, his eyes came up to Miss Gilsey in

other chill coming up. Some breath from the future wafted back and enveloped her. Some premature hint of woe and danger laid its weight upon her heart. As she expressed it afterward, she had a hunch, which impelled her to glance over to the large person at the next table, concealed for the moment behind a large cup of tea; and she became aware that he was not only drinking acutely, but listening acutely.

It was Miss Gilsey's rule never to flirt during business hours, but some force stronger than her rule held her immovably here.

"Er—how's Chicago?" she asked socially, straightening a teaspoon and pushing in the next chair.

"Still going strong," smiled the strange young man encouragingly.

"You look like a friend of mine's cousin

from there—name of Smith," volunteered Miss Gilsey.

"Sorry—my name happens to be Jones, and I'm from New York," he returned.

"Mining engineer?" queried Miss Gilsey.

"How did you guess?"

"The clothes," said Miss Gilsey sensibly. "From Stibbing, to give us the once-over," she added.

The young man smiled.

"You're a mind-reader," said he. "You're a young wonder. I didn't suppose a town like this could produce anything so amazing."

"Meaning?" asked Miss Gilsey, who was inclined to be definite.

"Anything so charmingly—sharp," he answered.

"Oh, never mind me," said Miss Gilsey impatiently. "You're knocking the town. In any one coming over from Stibbing that needs an explanation. What's the matter with the town?"

She was on edge for the reiteration, and almost at once it came.

"Nothing much," fenced the strange young man; "but it's such a jumping-off place."

From beneath her long lashes Miss Gilsey saw the large person at the next table set down his teacup, gaze into it a moment ruminatively, and rise.

"Pardon," said the large person generally. "I feel a chilliness. I wish the warmth from the steam-pipes. If the gentleman does not object, I eat my cheese at his table."

The gentleman, apparently surprised, twinkled toward Miss Gilsey a glance which implied that this blundering large person was amusing. Miss Gilsey, standing at attention, watched his surprise, his amusement, his cool, courteous response to the other's bungling advance. At the proper moment she pulled back the opposite chair and saw the large person settled upon it. Then, picking a leisurely way between the tables, she stopped beside a blond girl who was yawning behind a slack hand.

"Bouillon, Lil," said Miss Gilsey. "Whitefish and Waldorf salad—for No. 3. Hurry it! And when you've served it, kid, hang around the table. Put on a listenin'-in look, and report to me afterward. I got a bet with myself they send you away."

"Nobody ever yet had the chance to send me away fer listenin'-in, Mame," said

Lil Kenney. "I've always held myself proudly above it."

"Well, this is where you take the plunge," said Miss Gilsey briefly. "It's orders."

### III

BORN in the average girl is the ability to spot a last year's hat unerringly across a crowded restaurant without really looking. Born in the average boy is the necessity for a kick upon the shins, or a prod in the neighborhood of the ribs, before the passage of the dancer with the blazing hair and the sequin dress to her conspicuous table is duly registered upon his retina; and even then he will have to turn his head and stare.

As Miss Gilsey swung up and down the strip of green Brussels on her high white heels, her head never turned in the direction of the table by the steam-pipes, and yet she knew to an instant when Lil Kenney got her *congé*. She saw, without looking, that the young man was talking and gesticulating, and that the older one was nodding as if in time to slow music.

"Well?" she said sharply, whirling upon Lil as the girl banged the swinging door of the serving-room behind her.

"When I come up for the third time with the bowl of cracked ice, Mame," answered Lil obediently, "the old guy swore. The young one smiled, and—" Opening a closed fist, Lil Kenney exhibited a dollar bill crumpled upon her pink palm. "What's the idea?" she said.

Miss Gilsey shrugged.

"Bring me their dinner-card," she ordered, "as soon as they leave; and save me their table-cloth out of the basket."

Lil's mouth, opened to yawn, closed itself mechanically.

"What in the world for?" she ejaculated.

"Souvenirs," said Miss Gilsey over her shoulder. "The young one's got nice eyes."

The swinging door banged open and shut. Lil, pocketing her crumpled bill, opened her pink mouth and yawned.

The head waitress was standing in her doorway when the large person, stopping to choose a toothpick, left the dining-room.

"Young lady," said the large person, shaking a forefinger, "with anybody so smart as you in charge, the cheese should be mellow—more the consistency of chewing-gum as it meets the jaw. Your

cheese, young lady, for all you are so smart, is punk!"

"Sorry," said Miss Gilsey. "It's been hard to get them French cheeses because of the war. They came to us very irregular. One consignment of the finest Roquefort was smashed up by some foolish strikers."

"Roquefort!" said the large person impressively. "A marvelous cheese—my favorite cheese! Smashed up, you say? Damnation, I say."

"So did the boss, sir," agreed Miss Gilsey mildly. "Them silly Bolsheviks—whatever they are—seem to have a pipe this country is Russia; but they're scheduled to wake up."

She was standing in her doorway when the younger man, who had been deep in a little note-book, left his table and came up the strip of green Brussels.

"Curious old party!" he volunteered. "Wanted to talk with me about tinted soap."

"Wanted to talk with me about tainted cheese," said Miss Gilsey.

There was a pause.

"Odd, wasn't it," the young man began once more, "the way he butted in on us?"

"Oh, was it on us?" asked Miss Gilsey innocently.

There was another pause.

"I could see you thought it unusual," he began once more, patiently.

"You've missed the cream of what I thought, then," said Miss Gilsey.

"I'm waiting to hear it," he said quietly. "I'll wait all day, if necessary—to hear anything from you," he added.

"That's the line you were giving Effie," said Miss Gilsey.



"SORRY—MY NAME HAPPENS TO BE JONES, AND I'M FROM NEW YORK"

"Effie!" said he, genuinely surprised. "I don't know any Effies."

Silently, Miss Gilsey nodded toward the cigar-stand. The young man stared; then he laughed.

"So that is Effie!" said he. "You saw that, too? Shall we call Effie the false dawn? Tell me what you've been thinking—Aurora!"

Miss Gilsey glanced about her. The dining-room was deserted, save for Gladys pulling down the shades at the far end.



She and the young man stood quite alone on an island of green Brussels.

"He's not a mining engineer," said Miss Gilsey at length.

"And neither are you," she added mischievously, in a lower tone.

The young man's face, within a few inches of her own, did not move a muscle, and yet it altered under her eyes. It hardened.

"Are you about to take the next jump?" he asked at length. "Or have you already done so?"

"Ages ago," she said easily. "He was born chilly, in a place where they ride around behind sleigh-bells—the place where they're occupied largely in wavin' red flags and gettin' rid of the citizens that have clean shirts. He's ag'in' any government. He's down on honest work well paid; and no matter how much he gets, he's out for more. He's teachin' the other fellow to go out for more, and tryin' to scare the other fellow's boss into givin' it to him. He's been seen elsewhere in this country stirrin' up trouble. He's here to stir up trouble now!"

The young man's face, within a few inches of her own, did not change, but she distinctly saw him swallow once just above the low flannel collar.

"And — me?" he insisted very slowly. "What am I?"

Miss Gilsey glanced cautiously about her.

"Suppose we say that your business is smoking glasses—for eclipses!" she said impressively.

It can be stated that she was considerably dashed when he threw back his head and laughed — as naturally, as simply, as a pleased child.

"What are you doing this evening, Aurora?" he asked unexpectedly. "I've got a car here. We might go for a ride."

Miss Gilsey hesitated, almost blushed.

"What about Effie?" she asked.

"Forget Effie. I have."

"I—I rather think I'll go," deliberated Miss Gilsey. "My girl friend loves motor-ing. She sleeps best at fifty an hour."

"Bring her along," he answered. "What time?"

"Nine," said Miss Gilsey.

It happened that Mac, on his way from an interview with the house-carpenter, took a détour through the serving-room a few minutes later. Casting a flying glance toward one corner, where a single swinging electric hung over a table, he saw Miss Gilsey sitting very still beside it. Something drew him forcibly in that direction.

"What's all this?" said he. "Trigonometry?"

Spread flat before Miss Gilsey were two objects—a table-cloth and a dinner-card. As she raised her head to look at him, Mac saw with a curious little thrill that her face was very white and that her eyes were shining with unshed tears.

"But, Mame!" he heard himself stammering impetuously, unexpectedly. "But, Mame—little girl—"

She looked up at him dumbly, then lifted her hand from a little diagram which was drawn in pencil upon the back of the dinner-card, and which was repeated more faintly upon the table-cloth.

"Look at this, Mac," she said slowly; "and tell me where you've seen the place."

"Looks like a track," said Mac, bending his head. "A railroad—it's a long railroad bridge." Suddenly he brought his fist down on the table with a bang. "It's the big bridge on the main track this side the junction!"

Miss Gilsey, white-faced, shining-eyed, rose to him.

"I knew you'd get it, Mac," she said with a little dry sob. "You're so smart! That's the bridge, all right. It's—it's the jumping-off place!"

#### IV

MAC never knew just what happened on that first drive which Miss Gilsey took with the strange young man. He saw them start out at nine and return at a respectable eleven, for he chanced to be watching. In fact, he had been watching for the better part of an hour, hanging about the doorway, banging about the desk, smoking an unquiet cigarette under the shadow of the glass-domed carriage entrance which Presaba admired so unquestioningly.

He felt like a fool, yet he stuck there, waiting. He longed for a drunken miner out for trouble, for some one, any one, whom he might heartily kick. And then the low car slithered up to the carriage entrance, and Miss Gilsey, in a bright sweater and a tam, stepped lightly to the pavement.

Mac noticed that there was no laughter, that there were no good nights. Even to his jaundiced view there seemed something businesslike about this joy-ride, and yet his wretchedness got the upper hand of his reason and spoke.

"Where's Lil?" he demanded abruptly. "I thought she went along."

Miss Gilsey stopped short.

"Why, Mac!" she said. "Why—Mac! What are you doing here?"

"There's a comet expected in seventy-four years," said Mac bitterly, "and I want a front seat. Where's Lil?"

"Lil?" said Miss Gilsey vaguely. "We lost Lil somewhere. Her sister's got a sick baby, and she's been sittin' up with it nights. We dropped her there on our way."

"Huh!" laughed Mac, goaded by his misery. "Well, I didn't think it was in you, Mame!"

"You didn't think what was in me?" asked Miss Gilsey, who was inclined to be definite.

Mac threw back his arm with a gesture which included the universe. For all his responsibilities, Mac was quite young.

"Joy-riding with a man you don't know," said he. "It's—it's put you in Effie's class, with me!"

"Don't get me mad, Mac," warned Miss Gilsey; "for I like you—a lot—Mac."

"Yes, you do!" said Mac. "Enough to go off with the first fake engineer that crooks his finger!"

"Mac, for goodness' sake!" said Miss Gilsey, glancing behind her into the starlit night. "Mac, are you crazy? Has somebody got you doped?"

"Well, you're a woman," shrugged Mac, driven to the utmost by the gnawing of misery, "and easy—like all the rest of them!"

For a moment Miss Gilsey looked at him, and not even the wretchedness of him, reaching her, softened her. She stood very still, just looking at him; but when she spoke, it was with a definiteness which was final.

"That last lets me out," she said, drawing a deep breath. "This is where I get off. You needn't speak to me after this; and you needn't save me any more of your Chicago papers. I can get along without anything further from you!"

Turning upon a definite heel, Miss Gilsey threw over her shoulder one last thrust which reached, unerringly, its quivering mark.

"I may be a woman—like all the rest," she said, "but I notice I've never been so particularly easy—with you!"

#### V

AFTER that, life went along somehow at the Enterprise Hotel, but for two people the soul of life, the essence, the bouquet,



"MR. JONES IS ASKIN' YOU, MAC, AT THE PERIL OF YOUR LIFE, TO HELP UNCLE SAM!"

had departed. Every time Miss Gilsey threw open the long glass doors and missed the flying glance, every time Mac took a détour to avoid the serving-room, ghosts seemed to walk for them—ghosts of glances, of breathless meetings on the stairs, of happy days.

Mac threw himself into his work with feverish energy. Miss Gilsey went driving in the evenings with the strange young man, Mr. Jones, who, in due course, ceased to be strange. Daily he and the older man made expeditions together.

One day the Enterprise Hotel welcomed two new arrivals—powerfully built men, bristling with beards, and accompanied by some shabby luggage. Mac, whirling the register about for them, read upside down the names which they duly inscribed upon it, and smiled bitterly to himself.

"James Robinson, New York."

"Charles Johnson, Boston."

And then Mac did a singular thing. Taking the pen used by the two, who were already ascending to the front rooms assigned them, he inserted a word between each name and the name of the city which followed it; and the word in each case was "*via*." After which he felt better.

The cryptic little word, Mac's small concession to an intolerable situation, did not pass unnoticed. The strange young man, Mr. Jones, lounging over the register, dis-

covered it a short time later, and called Mac's attention to it.

"Who wrote that in?" asked Mr. Jones.

"I did," said Mac belligerently.

Mr. Jones considered Mac attentively with eyes which looked opaque.

"Have you a car?" he demanded then, unexpectedly.

"I have not," said Mac. "I don't keep an elephant in the back yard, either," he added.

"Well, can you drive a car at a pinch?" asked the strange young man.

"I can do anything at a pinch," said Mac bitterly; "but you needn't bank on me for anything, Clarence. I don't like you, Clarence!"

After which the strange young man stared at Mac for a further silent moment and then took himself off.

## VI

As Miss Gilsey said afterward, it never rains but some guy gets wet. With the advent of the two new gentlemen with the shabby luggage, the table by the window

hitherto occupied by Mr. Jones and the large, bald, bearded individual was enlarged to seat the four. Miss Gilsey, assisted by Gladys, took them in charge herself.

For two quiet days nothing happened. Presaba occupied itself with a fire at the sawmill, with a baseball game against the Stibbing team, with getting the ore out. Long trains of open freight-cars, loaded with the precious mounds of dull red, tooted from sidings before swinging confidently into the main track. Long vessels nosed into the huge docks at Duluth, to lie in wait below the opening chutes. The chain of blue lakes, the locks at the Soo, the intervening rivers, were crowded with carriers of the material for which the mills, stricken Europe, the world, was clamoring. Nations, joined hand in hand to restore civilization, waited for the ore to flow out quickly, regularly, in bulk, and Presaba, in the intervals of doing its part, played baseball within its red hills and slept secure.

But Miss Gilsey did not sleep secure. She tossed and turned at night upon her narrow bed, for she felt the impending storm. When it came at last, it came as such things do, with amazing swiftmess. It came, as such things do, in the darkness.

Alone in the serving-room, late one evening she was poring over a newspaper beneath the hanging electric bulb when the swinging doors banged open and Mac came in—a Mac white, defiant, on edge. Instinctively Miss Gilsey rose, one hand on the table.



THE LARGE GENTLEMAN CAME AT MISS GILSEY WITH A BULL-LIKE RUSH, BUT—

"I wouldn't be here," began Mac breathlessly, "but there's an order come down for cheese and beer for one, with the particular request that you will serve it yourself."

"Well?" said Miss Gilsey sharply. "What's the room number?"

"Don't try to kid me, Mame," said Mac, breathing quickly. "You know the room number all right. You know who phoned for it!"

"Well?" said Miss Gilsey.

"It's—it's a signal between you two," said Mac. "You've been waiting here to get it, only I got it first at the desk!"

"Well?" said Miss Gilsey once more.

"Aren't you even going to deny it?" cried Mac in spite of himself.



—ALREADY SHE WAS HURLING THE TELEPHONE THROUGH THE OPEN WINDOW

"Why should I, when it's true?"

After which there seemed to be nothing further to say. Miss Gilsey stirred to gather together her order. Mac, after a moment, turned away; and, as he turned, something about the sag of his young shoulders beneath the thin blue coat, something about the way his rough, dark hair grew into rebellious waves, reached Miss Gilsey so poignantly that she faltered.

"A—a real gentleman," she said wrathfully, "would offer to stick around and carry it up for me!"

Mac whirled.

"Can't you see what's the matter with me?" he said fiercely. "Can't you make allowance? I'm in love—in love—in love—

for the first time in my life, and it's torture, I've got it so bad! I act like an ass when I'm with you, but I can't keep away. I'm lo-coed. I'm jealous even of Adelstone. Would you believe that I forgot to charge up two Duluth calls on that anarchist's bill? Gone, the two of them, bag and baggage, and me forgetting two Duluth calls!" Unconsciously Mac threw out his hands. "And you aren't even sorry for me!" he ended blankly.

Miss Gilsey had flushed into sudden life and activity.

"Sorry? Never!" she said superbly over her shoulder, banging down her tray. "The last thing in the world—*sorry!* Just now I haven't time. I want Mr. Jones down here in a hurry, and I want you to get him."

Mac, bewildered, dazed with emotion, drew his hand across his eyes and started

blindly, but Miss Gilsey's voice halted him midway.

"Mac," she said softly, "you ain't even noticed we got trouble ahead, have you?"

When Mr. Jones arrived in the serving-room—with Mac, still dazed, a pace ahead—Miss Gilsey's tray stood neatly spread. Miss Gilsey, arms akimbo, was ready for what might come.

"They've gone," she said promptly. "Mac here has been making out their bills. They've given you the slip; and why have you been asleep at the switch?"

"They can't be gone!" cried Mr. Jones. "I was to start with them—at eleven!"

Miss Gilsey glanced up at the serving-room clock.

"They've beat you to it by half an hour," she said dryly. "Good-by, bridge! Uncle Sam ought to put women on these jobs. Men are poor substitutes!"

"Lenski must have managed to bribe some one and get word through to them that I've come here in his place, with his credentials," said Mr. Jones, thinking aloud. "They've got my number. They decide to proceed—to make sure of this one job, in spite of me. They couldn't reach the old man, because I was with him—have been with him all evening. I even answered the phone, and blocked them there. We may pull out of this yet, Aurora. Can I have your young man here?"

"It's up to him," said Miss Gilsey.

"What is all this?" asked Mac.

"It's a movie, Mac, in three reels and a stagger," said Miss Gilsey. "You picked them for what they were when you wrote your cute little word in the book—"

"Via," said Mac.

"Petrograd," added Miss Gilsey. "You remember me and the diagrams that day on the dinner-card? Well, the old fellow up-stairs is shaking things up for the 'I-Refuse-to-Work-or-to-Let-Any-Other-Fellow-Work' gang—terrible things, Mac. One's due to come off at the Soo, and one at the docks at Duluth—a string of 'em, Mac, all to keep the ore from going out, all ready to pull off when he blows the whistle; and one of 'em's scheduled for to-night on the main line this side the junction. Mr. Jones is here in place of one of their men that has been caught. Mr. Jones is here, at the peril of his life, to stop them Bolshevikies. Uncle Sam is puttin' the clamps on them before they start; and Mr. Jones is askin' you, Mac, at the peril of your life, to help Uncle Sam!"

"Sure!" said Mac.

"Wait a minute," said Miss Gilsey, catching him by the lapels of his thin blue coat. For one instant she faltered. "It's dangerous, Mac!"

Bending his dark head, Mac kissed each of Miss Gilsey's hands in turn.

## VII

THEY had no time for definite orders to Miss Gilsey. It simply amounted, said Mr. Jones, to their leaving the old man to her, to her having to use her own judgment. Mr. Jones cursed his luck in being short-handed as he jammed his cap down over his eyes; and they were gone.

Miss Gilsey waited to hear the hum of the low car as they backed out of the hotel shed, and then carried up her tray. Knocking at the door of the brown parlor, one flight up, with no orders, with no knowledge of what might come, but with resolution, courage, high purpose within her, she opened the door at the prompt answer from within and went in with the tray.

The brown parlor looked peaceful enough. It contained a writing-table with a small pile of folded papers neatly arranged beneath a paper-weight, clouds of blue smoke, an electric reading-light, a telephone, an easy chair. The large, bald, bearded gentleman, in a dressing-gown and Romeo slippers, sat in the easy chair.

"So!" he said, leisurely puffing blue clouds. "It is the very smart young lady herself! You do not go riding this evening with my young friend Mr. Jones?"

Setting her tray upon the table, Miss Gilsey moved the telephone from its position at the large gentleman's elbow and pushed the tray into its place.

"Your young friend Mr. Jones didn't ask me," she said briefly. "Is that beer cold enough?"

Testing the bottle carefully with his hand, the large gentleman at length nodded. Miss Gilsey opened the bottle with a deft turn of her wrist, filled his glass, and stood at attention.

"Where is our young friend Mr. Jones?" asked the large gentleman, after he had set down his glass and smacked his lips.

"Search me," said Miss Gilsey cheerfully. "Try the cheese."

Carefully, reflectively, the large gentleman tried the cheese, munched the toasted crackers, and drank his beer, with Miss Gilsey standing at attention beside the writing-table. In a leisurely fashion he discoursed upon cheese—cheeses he had eaten, cheeses he had not eaten, cheeses which he meant to eat some day. Miss Gilsey, standing at attention, listened appreciatively. It wasn't such a long run to the jumping-off place. They might make it—they might just make it in time!

She became aware that the voice had ceased. Even cheese, as a topic of conversation, will crumble away. The large gentleman was relighting his pipe.

"Where in thunder is my young friend Jones?" he demanded irascibly.

"Er—I been meanin' to ask you for a long time," hesitated Miss Gilsey, "about

this here Russian situation. Did the Czar get mad at Belgium and throw down his crown, or what?"

The large gentleman, regarding Miss Gilsey with a slow stare, puffed a preliminary blue cloud into the air and spoke. For a long time Miss Gilsey stood at attention under a hail of words which she weathered without comprehending.

And then the telephone-bell rang. It shrilled suddenly into the smoky room and shivered the large gentleman's monologue. It shivered along Miss Gilsey's nerves to her brain and registered itself there as an immediate menace.

Instantly she picked up the telephone and backed off from the table. The large gentleman, stupefied, gazed at her proceeding for one stunned instant and rose.

"Young lady," said he sternly, "I answer that phone!"

"Nobody answers this phone—to-night," said Miss Gilsey, rigid and white.

"Young lady," said the large gentleman slowly, "I answer that phone!"

"Over my dead body," said Miss Gilsey.

She stood poised between the table and the open window, the telephone in her hand, the bell shrilling away unheeded. The large gentleman crossed the room hurriedly, stumbling on his dressing-gown, and banged open a door.

"Jones!" he called sharply. "Robinson! Johnson!" And then more softly: "Ilya! Ivan! *A moi!*"

Nothing answered. The adjoining room stood dark and silent. The large gentleman turned and came at Miss Gilsey with a bull-like rush; but already she had whirled, and was hurling the telephone, with its broken cord dangling impotently, through the open window. Leaning over the sill, she saw Mr. Adelstone's derby below, above a peaceful bedtime cigar.

"Mr. Adelstone!" she called. "Help! America needs you—up here—quick—come on up—for Uncle Sam!"

And then the words were choked into silence. It seemed to Miss Gilsey, as she was pulled back over the window-sill, that her life was being choked into silence as well. The last thing she sensed was the insistent shrill of the telephone-bell shivering along her nerves to her clouded brain, impotent, unanswered.

Three faces loomed dimly before Miss Gilsey at the foot of her narrow bed—Mr.

Adelstone's, white but smiling; young Jones's, grimly satisfied; Mac's, hungry-eyed, anxious, vivid, compelling. She became aware, after an interval, that her own face was wet, and that Lil Kenney, surprisingly there, was kneeling beside her, holding her hand.

"His—papers," Miss Gilsey managed weakly. "A little pile—on the desk—"

"Safe!" said Mr. Jones triumphantly. "We've bagged the lot—a bad lot at that. Mr. Adelstone here is a hero. He sat on the old man's stomach, after he pulled him off you, and beat his face to a jelly with his shoes. Great action, Adelstone's!"

"Did you—in time?" managed Miss Gilsey.

"Safe!" said Mr. Jones. "Your young man here's a hero. Landed like a brick house on Johnson and flattened him out. Rough stuff! Drove the car to the junction when I broke my arm, and we rounded up Robinson, phoning here. A clean sweep, Aurora!"

Miss Gilsey closed her eyes contentedly.

"We aren't saying anything yet about you," said Mr. Jones, "but we will—when you can stand it. You're one peach of a girl, Aurora!"

"He might 'a' killed you, Mame," sobbed Lil Kenney. "You can't take a chance with them Bolsheviks!"

"I remember now where I saw before that guy with the beard," contributed Mr. Adelstone. "Addressin' a hat-maker's union that didn't want to strike. A good riddance to our country—him!"

Mac said nothing, but Miss Gilsey, meeting his gaze over the foot of her bed, closed her eyes quickly.

"Give her time," said Mr. Jones. "Give her air. Let's all get out but Mac, here. He's quiet enough. I'm due to extend my tender greetings to the old man!"

At length, in the quiet which followed, Miss Gilsey opened her eyes once more.

"There's never been anything the matter with your courage, Mac," she said softly, "except when it came to me!"

"That's because you had me locoed," said Mac.

A long interval. Then Miss Gilsey, lifting one hand weakly, found it closely clasped, warmly encircled.

"We've put one over on Stibbing, haven't we Mac?" she whispered contentedly. "We've done pretty well—for a jumping-off place!"

# The Golden Scorpion\*

## AN ORIENTAL MYSTERY

By Sax Rohmer

Author of "The Yellow Claw," "Dr. Fu-Manchu," etc.

**D**R. KEPPEL STUART, a physician with a humdrum practise in a quiet part of London, is visited by a rather unusual patient—a beautiful girl who gives her name as Mlle. Dorian, and who complains of insomnia. One evening she calls when the doctor is out, and waits for him; but Stuart, coming in unexpectedly, finds her searching his desk. She begs him to forgive her, hinting that she is acting under compulsion, and warning him that he is in danger. Stuart connects her warning with the strange figure of a cowed man, of whom he has caught a glimpse outside his window at night.

Stuart becomes involved in another strange affair when Inspector Dunbar, of the London detective service, consults the doctor about a mysterious case that he is investigating. He shows Stuart a fragment of a broken ornament which has been found in the clothes of a man drowned in the Thames, and which the doctor identifies as the tail of a golden scorpion. He asks if Stuart knows anything of an Oriental sect or cult of scorpion-worshippers. Stuart, who has lived in the East, recalls an incident in a Chinese city, when his rickshaw boy displayed great terror at the sight of a veiled figure whom the boy called "The Scorpion"; but beyond this he can throw no light on the subject.

It appears that some unknown but highly malignant power is at work, which is suspected—though without any tangible evidence—of having caused the sudden deaths of a number of eminent men in several countries. A famous French detective, M. Gaston Max, has devoted himself to the investigation of this extraordinary case, and it is on instructions received from Paris that the London police are acting. For this reason it is a shock when Sergeant Sowerby, one of Inspector Dunbar's subordinates, reports that the dead man in whose clothes the golden scorpion's tail was found has been positively identified as Gaston Max. The inspector follows up this disquieting piece of news by warning Dr. Stuart, just as Mlle. Dorian warned him, that he is in danger.

### XI

**W**HEN Inspector Dunbar had taken his departure, Stuart stood for a long time staring out of the study window at the little lawn, with its border of neatly trimmed privet, above which, at intervals, arose the mop crowns of dwarf acacias. A spell of warm weather seemed at last to have begun, and clouds of gnats floated over the grass, their tiny wings glittering in the sunshine. Despite the nearness of teeming streets, this was a quiet backwater of London's stream.

Stuart sighed, and returned to some work which the visit of the Scotland Yard man had interrupted.

Later in the afternoon he had occasion to visit the institution to which he had recently been appointed as medical officer. In contemplation of the squalor through which his steps led him he sought forgetfulness of the

Scorpion problem—and of the dark eyes of Mlle. Dorian. He was not entirely successful, and, returning by a different route, he lost himself in memories which were sweetly mournful.

A taxicab passed him, moving slowly very close to the sidewalk. He scarcely noted it until it had proceeded some distance ahead of him; but then, happening to look at it, he saw that Mlle. Dorian was leaning out of the window, with her head turned toward him!

Stuart's heart leaped high. For an instant he paused, then began to walk rapidly after the retreating vehicle. Perceiving that she had attracted his attention, the girl extended a white-gloved hand from the window and dropped a note upon the edge of the sidewalk. Immediately she withdrew into the vehicle, which moved away at accelerated speed, swung around the next corner, and was gone.

\* This story began in the January number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

Stuart ran forward and picked up the note. Without pausing to read it, he hurried on to the corner. The cab was already a hundred yards away, and he recognized that pursuit was out of the question. The streets were almost deserted at the moment, and apparently no one had witnessed the episode. He unfolded the sheet of plain note-paper, faintly perfumed with jasmine, and read the following, written in an uneven feminine hand:

Close your shutters at night. Please do not think too ill of me.

Dusk found Stuart in a singular frame of mind. He was torn between his duty to the community, or what he conceived to be his duty to the community, and—something else.

A messenger from New Scotland Yard had brought him a bundle of documents relating to the case of Sir Frank Narcombe and a smaller packet touching upon the sudden end of Henrik Ericksen, the Norwegian electrician, and the equally unexpected death of the Grand Duke Ivan. There were medical certificates, proceedings of coroners, reports of detectives, evidence of specialists, and statements of friends, relatives, and servants of the deceased. For a proper examination of all the documents he would need hours of close study. Stuart was flattered by the assistant commissioner's opinion of his ability, but dubious of his chance of detecting any flaw in the evidence which had escaped the scrutiny of so many highly trained observers.

He paced the study restlessly. Although more than six hours had elapsed, he had not communicated to Scotland Yard the fact of his having seen Mlle. Dorian that afternoon. A hundred times he had read her little note, although he knew it by heart, knew the form of every letter, the odd crossing of the "t's" and the splashy dotting of the "i's."

If only he could have taken counsel with some one—with some one not bound to act upon such information—it would have relieved his mental stress. His ideas were so chaotic that he felt himself to be incapable of approaching the task presented by the pile of papers lying upon his table.

The night was pleasantly warm and the sky cloudless. Often enough he found himself glancing toward the opened French windows. Once he had peered closely across into the belt of shadow below the privet

hedge, thinking that he had detected something which moved there. Stepping to the window, the slinking shape had emerged into the moonlight—and had proclaimed itself to be a black cat!

Sometimes Stuart felt that it would be prudent to act upon the advice so strangely offered, yet he refrained from doing so. It was so warm that to spend his evenings with closed and barred shutters would be insufferable. Up and down the room he paced tirelessly, always confronted by the eternal problem.

Forcing himself at last to begin work, if only as a sedative, he filled and lighted his pipe, turned off the center lamp, and lit the reading-lamp on his table. He sat down to consider the papers bearing upon the death of Ericksen. For half an hour he read on steadily, making a number of pencil notes. Then he desisted and sat staring straight before him.

What possible motive could there be in assassinating those people? The case of the grand duke might be susceptible of explanation, but those of Henrik Ericksen and Sir Frank Narcombe were not. Furthermore, Stuart could perceive no links connecting the three men, and no reason why they should have engaged the attention of a common enemy. Such crimes would seem to be purposeless. Assuming that the Scorpion was an individual, that individual was apparently a dangerous homicidal maniac.

But, throughout the documents, he could discover no clue pointing to the existence of such an entity. The Scorpion might be an invention of the fertile brain of M. Gaston Max; for it had become more and more evident, as Stuart read, that the attempt to trace these deaths to an identical source had originated at the Service de Sûreté, and it was from Paris that the name of the Scorpion had come.

The fate of Max was significant, of course. The chances of his death proving to have been due to accident were almost negligible, and the fact that a fragment of a golden scorpion had actually been found upon his body was certainly curious.

"Close your shutters at night!"

How the words haunted Stuart, and how hotly he despised himself for a growing apprehension which refused to be ignored! It was mental rather than physical, this dread which grew with the approach of midnight. It resembled the strange feeling that had robbed him of individuality and all but

stricken him inert when he had seen upon the moon-bright screen of the curtains the shadow of a cowed man.

Evil forces seemed to be stirring, and some unseen menace crept near to him out of the darkness.

The house was of early Victorian fashion, and massive folding shutters were provided to close the French windows. Stuart never used them, as a matter of fact, but now he tested the fastenings which kept them in place against the inner wall, and even moved them in order to learn if they were still serviceable.

Of all the mysteries which baffled him, that of the piece of cardboard in the envelope sealed with a Chinese coin was the most puzzling and the most irritating. It seemed like the purposeless trick of a child, yet it had led to the presence of the cowed man—and to the presence of Mlle. Dorian. What did it mean?

He sat down at his table again.

"Confound the whole business!" he said. "It is sending me crazy!"

Selecting from the heap of documents a large sheet of note-paper bearing a blue diagram of a human bust, marked with figures and marginal notes, he began to read the report to which it was appended—that of Dr. Halesowen. It stated that the late Sir Frank Narcombe had a horizontal heart, slightly misplaced and dilated, and added several other details which really threw no light whatever upon the cause of the distinguished surgeon's death.

"I have a horizontal heart," growled Stuart; "and considering my consumption of tobacco, it is almost certainly dilated; but I don't expect to drop dead in a theater, nevertheless!"

He read on, striving to escape from that shadowy apprehension; but as he read he was listening to the night sounds of London, to the whirring of distant motors, the whistling of engines upon the railway, the dim hooting of sirens from the Thames. A slight breeze had arisen. It rustled in the feathery foliage of the acacias and made a whispering sound as it stirred the leaves of the privet hedge.

The drone of an approaching car reached his ears. Pencil in hand, he sat motionless, listening.

The sound grew louder, then ceased. Either the car had passed, or it had stopped somewhere near the house. Came a rap on the door.

"Yes!" called Stuart, and stood up, conscious of excitement.

Mrs. McGregor came in.

"There is nothing further you'll be wanting to-night?" she asked.

"No," said Stuart, strangely disappointed, but smiling at the old lady cheerfully. "I shall turn in very shortly."

"A keen east wind has risen," she continued, severely eying the opened windows. "Even for a medical man you are strangely imprudent. Shall I shut the windows?"

"No, don't trouble, Mrs. McGregor. The room gets very stuffy with tobacco-smoke, and really it is quite a warm night. I shall close them before I retire, of course."

"Ah, well!" sighed Mrs. McGregor, preparing to depart. "Good night, Mr. Keppel."

"Good night, Mrs. McGregor."

She retired, and Stuart sat staring out into the darkness. He was not prone to superstition, but it seemed like tempting Providence to remain there with the windows open any longer. Yet, paradoxically, he lacked the moral courage to close them—to admit to himself that he was afraid!

The telephone-bell rang, and he started back in his chair as if to avoid a blow.

By doing so he avoided destruction. At the very instant that the bell rang out sharply in the silence—so exact is the timetable of kismet—a needlelike ray of blue light shot across the lawn from beyond and above the hedge. But for that nervous start, it must have struck full upon the back of Stuart's skull. Instead, it shone past his head, which it missed only by inches. Experiencing a sensation as if some one had buffeted him furiously upon the cheek, he pitched out of his chair and fell prone upon the carpet.

The first object which the ray touched was the telephone, and next, beyond it, a medical dictionary, beyond that again, the grate, in which a fire was laid.

"Good Heavens!" groaned Stuart. "What is it?"

An intense crackling sound deafened him, and the air of the room seemed to have become as hot as that of an oven. There came a series of dull reports—an uncanny wailing—and the needle-ray vanished. A monstrous shadow, moon-cast, which had lain across the carpet of the lawn—the shadow of a cowed man—vanished also.

Clutching the side of his head, which throbbed and tingled as if from the blow of

an open hand, Stuart struggled to his feet. There was smoke in the room, with a smell of burning and of fusing metal. He looked wildly at the table.

The mouthpiece of the telephone had vanished!

"Good Heavens!" he groaned again, and clutched at the back of the chair.

His dictionary was smoldering slowly. It had a neat round hole, some three inches in diameter, bored completely through, from cover to cover. The fire in the grate was flaring madly up the chimney.

The room was laden with suffocating fumes. Stuart stood clutching the chair and striving to retain his sanity, to regain his composure.

A moment later he heard the purr of a motor in the lane beside the house. Some one was running toward the back gate of the house—was scrambling over the hedge—was racing across the lawn; and then a man burst into the study.

It was a man of somewhat heavy build, clean-shaven, and inclined to pallor. The bluish hirsute tinge about his lips and jaw lent added vigor to a flexible but masterful mouth. His dark hair was tinged with gray, his dark eyes were brilliant with excitement. He was very smartly dressed and wore light tan gloves. He reeled suddenly, clutching at a chair for support.

"Quick! Quick!" he cried. "The telephone—*ah!*"

Just inside the window he stood, swaying and breathing rapidly, his gaze upon the destroyed instrument.

"*Mon Dieu!*" he said. "What has happened, then?"

Stuart stared at the newcomer dazedly.

"Hell has been in my room," he replied. "That's all!"

"Ah!" said the stranger. "Again he eludes me! The telephone was the only chance. *Pas de blague*, we are finished!"

He dropped into a chair, removed his light-gray hat, and began to dry his moist brow with a silk handkerchief. Stuart stared at him like a man who is stupefied. The room was still laden with strange fumes.

"Blimey!" remarked the newcomer, and his Whitechapel was as perfect as his Montmartre. He was looking at the decapitated telephone. "This is a knock-out!"

"Might I ask," said Stuart, endeavoring to collect his scattered senses, "where you came from?"

"From up a tree," was the astonishing reply. "It was the only way to get over."

"Up a tree?"

"Exactly. Yes, I was foolish—I am too heavy. But what could I do? We must begin all over again."

Stuart began to doubt his own sanity. This was no ordinary man.

"Might I ask," he said, "who you are, and what you are doing in my house?"

"Ah!" The stranger laughed merrily. "You wonder about me—I can see it. Permit me to present myself—Gaston Max, at your service."

"Gaston Max?" Stuart glared at the speaker incredulously. "Gaston Max? Why, I conduct a post-mortem examination upon Gaston Max to-morrow, in order to learn whether he was poisoned!"

"Do not trouble, doctor. That poor fellow is not Gaston Max, and he was not poisoned. You may accept my word for it. I had the misfortune to strangle him!"

NOTE—The nine following chapters contain the statement of M. Gaston Max.

## XII

I, GASTON MAX, am drawing up this statement in duplicate for the guidance of whoever may inherit the task of tracing the Scorpion—a task which I have begun. One copy will be lodged at the Service de Sûreté in Paris, and the other with the commissioner of police, New Scotland Yard.

As I apprehend that I may be assassinated at any time, I propose to put upon record all that I have learned concerning the series of murders which I believe to be traceable to a certain person. In the event of my death, my French colleagues will open the sealed packet containing this statement, and the English assistant commissioner of the special branch responsible for international affairs will receive instructions to open the second packet, which I shall have lodged at New Scotland Yard.

This matter properly commenced, then, with the visit to Paris, incognito, of the Grand Duke Ivan, that famous soldier of whom so much was expected. Because I had made myself responsible for his safety during his stay in the French capital, I—also incognito, be it understood—struck up a friendship with one Casimir, the grand duke's valet.

Nothing is sacred to a valet, and from Casimir I counted upon learning the real

reason which had led the nobleman to visit Paris at so troublous a time. Knowing the grand duke to be a man of gallantry, I anticipated finding a woman in the case—and I was not wrong. Yes, there was a woman, and, *nom d'un nom*, she was beautiful! Now in Paris we have many beautiful women, and in times of international strife it is true that we have had to shoot a few. For my own part, I say with joy that I have never been instrumental in bringing one of them to such an end. Perhaps I am sentimental—it is a French weakness—but on those few occasions when I have found a guilty woman in my power, if she was a beauty, *morbleu*, she escaped! It may be that I have seen to it that she was kept out of further mischief, but nevertheless she never met a firing-party because of me. Very well!

From the good fellow Casimir I learned that a certain dancer appearing at one of our Montmartre theaters had written to the Grand Duke Ivan, craving the honor of his autograph, and enclosing her photograph. It was enough. One week later the autograph arrived—attached to an invitation to dine with the grand duke at his hotel in Paris. Yes, he had come to Paris on receiving the photograph.

I have said that he was susceptible, and I have said that she was beautiful. I address myself to men of the world, and I shall not be in error if I assume that they will say:

"A wealthy fool and a designing woman. It is an old story!"

Let us see.

The confidences of Casimir interested me in more ways than one. In the first place, I had particular reasons for suspecting any one who sought to obtain access to the grand duke. These were diplomatic. And in the second place I had suspicions of Zâra el Khalâ. These were personal.

Yes, so she called herself—Zâra el Khalâ, which in Arabic means "flower of the desert." She professed to be an Egyptian, and certainly she had the long, almond-shaped eyes of the East; but her white skin betrayed her, and I knew that while she might possess Eastern blood, she was more nearly allied to Europe than to Africa.

It is my business to note unusual matters, you understand, and I noticed that this beautiful and accomplished woman, of whom all Paris was beginning to speak rapturously, remained for many weeks at a

small Montmartre theater. Her performance, which was unusually decorous for the type of establishment at which she was appearing, had not led to an engagement elsewhere.

This aroused the suspicions to which I have referred. I called at the theater—the Théâtre Coquerico—in the character of a vaudeville agent, and was informed by the management that Zâra el Khalâ received no visitors, professional or otherwise. A small but expensive car awaited her at the stage door.

My suspicions increased. I went away, but returned on the following night, differently attired, and from a hiding-place which I had selected on the previous evening I watched the dancer depart.

She came out so enveloped in furs and veils as to be unrecognizable. A Hindu wearing a chauffeur's uniform opened the door of the car for her, and then, having arranged the rugs to her satisfaction, mounted to the wheel and drove away.

I traced the car. It had been hired for the purpose of taking Zâra el Khalâ from her hotel—a small one in an unfashionable part of Paris—to the theater and back again nightly. I sent a man to call upon her at the hotel—in order to obtain press material, ostensibly. She declined to see him.

I became really interested. I sent her a choice bouquet, having the card of a nobleman attached to it, together with a message of respectful admiration. It was returned.

I prevailed upon one of the most gallant and handsome cavalry officers in Paris to endeavor to make her acquaintance. He was rebuffed.

*Eh bien!* I knew then that Mlle. Zâra of the desert was unusual.

You will at once perceive that when I heard from the worthy Casimir how this unapproachable lady had actually written to the Grand Duke Ivan, and had gone so far as to send him her photograph, I became excited. I felt that I might be upon the brink of some important discovery.

I set six of my first-class men at work, three being detailed to watch the hotel of the Grand Duke Ivan, and three to watch Zâra el Khalâ. Two more agents were employed in watching the Hindu servant, and one in observing my good friend Casimir. Thus nine clever men and myself were immediately engaged upon the case.

Why do I speak of a "case," when thus far nothing of apparent importance had oc-

curred? I will explain. Although the grand duke traveled incognito, his government knew of the journey, and not unnaturally wished to learn with what object it had been undertaken.

At the time when I made the acquaintance of Casimir, the grand duke had been in Paris for three days, and he was—according to my informant—"like a raging lion." The charming dancer had vouchsafed no reply to his invitation, and on presenting himself in person he had met with the same reception that had been accorded to myself and to the others who had sought to obtain an interview with Zâra el Khalâ.

My state of mystification grew more and more profound. I studied the reports of my nine assistants.

It appeared that the girl had been in Paris for two months. She occupied a suite of rooms, in which all her meals were served. Except the Hindu who drove the hired car, she had no servant. She never appeared in the public part of the hotel unless veiled, and then merely in order to pass out to the car or in from it on returning.

She drove out every day. She had been followed, of course, but her proceedings were unexceptionable. Leaving the car at a point in the Bois de Boulogne, she would take a short walk, if the day was fine enough, never proceeding out of sight of the Hindu, who followed with the automobile. She would then drive back to her hotel. She never received visits, and never met any one during these daily excursions.

I turned to the report dealing with the Hindu.

He had hired a room high up under the roof of an apartment-house where foreign waiters and others had their abodes. He bought and cooked his own food, which apparently consisted solely of rice, lentils, and fruit. Every morning he went to the garage, attended to the car, and called for his mistress. Having returned, he remained until evening in his own apartment. At night, after returning from the theater, he sometimes went out. Where he went, my agent did not know, for when he attempted pursuit he had failed to keep track of his quarry. I therefore detached the man who was watching Casimir, and whose excellent reports revealed the fact that Casimir was an honest fellow—as valets go—and instructed him to assist in tracing the movements of the Hindu.

Two nights later they tracked him to a riverside café kept by a gigantic quadroom from the West Indies and patronized by men of the class that forms a link between the lowest ranks of industry and the criminal world—itinerant vendors of Eastern rugs, street performers, Turkish cigarette-makers, and the like.

At last I began to have hope. The grand duke at this time was speaking of leaving Paris, but as he had found temporary consolation in the smiles of a lady engaged at the Folies, I did not anticipate that he would depart for several days, at any rate. Also, he was the kind of man who is stimulated by obstacles.

The Hindu remained for an hour in the café, smoking, and drinking some kind of sirup, and one of my fellows watched him. Presently the proprietor called him into a little room behind the counter, and closed the door. The Hindu and the quadroom remained there for a few minutes; then the Hindu came out and left the café, returning to his abode.

There was a telephone in the inner room of the café, and my agent was of opinion that the Indian had entered either to make or to receive a call. I caused the line to be tapped.

On the following night the Hindu came back to the café, followed by one of my men. I posted myself at a strategic point and listened for any message that might pass over the line to or from the café.

At about the same hour as before—according to the report—some one called up the establishment, asking for "Miguel." This was the quadroom, and I heard his thick voice replying. The other voice—the one that had spoken first—was curiously sibilant, but very distinct. It did not sound like the voice of a Frenchman, or of any European.

This was the conversation:

"Miguel?"

"Miguel speaks."

"Scorpion—there is a message for Chunda Lal."

"Very good!"

Almost holding my breath, so intense was my excitement, I waited while Miguel went to bring the Hindu. Suddenly a new voice spoke—that of the Hindu.

"Chunda Lal speaks," it said.

I clenched my teeth; I knew that I must not miss a syllable.

Scorpion replied in voluble Hindustani—

a language of which I know less than a dozen words.

### XIII

ALTHOUGH I had met with an unforeseen check, I had nevertheless learned three things. I had learned that Miguel, the quadroon, was possibly in league with the Hindu; that the Hindu was called Chunda Lal; and that Chunda Lal received messages, probably instructions, from a third party, who announced his presence by the word "Scorpion."

One of my fellows, of course, had been in the café all the evening, and from him I obtained confirmation of the fact that it was the Hindu who had been summoned to the telephone, and whom I had heard speaking. Instantly upon the man at the café replacing the telephone and disconnecting, I called up the exchange. They had been warned, and were in readiness.

"From what subscriber did that call come?" I demanded.

Alas, another check awaited me—it had originated in a public call office, and Scorpion was untraceable by this means!

Despair is not permitted by the traditions of the Service de Sûreté. Therefore I returned to my flat and recorded the facts of the matter thus far established. I perceived that I had to deal, not with a designing woman, but with some shadowy being of whom she was an instrument. The anomaly of her life was in a measure explained. She sojourned in Paris for some mysterious purpose which was concerned—I could not doubt it—with the Grand Duke Ivan. Apparently this was not an amorous but a political intrigue.

I communicated, at a late hour, with the senior of the three men watching the grand duke. On that same evening the nobleman had sent a handsome piece of jewelry, purchased in the Rue de la Paix, to the dancer. It had been returned.

In the morning I met the good Casimir at his favorite café. He had just discovered that Zâra el Khalâ drove daily to the Bois de Boulogne, alone, and that afternoon the grand duke had determined to accost her during her solitary walk.

I prepared myself for this event. Arrayed in a workman's blouse, and carrying a modest luncheon and a small bottle of wine in a basket, I concealed myself in that part of the Bois which was the favorite recreation-ground of the dancer.

The grand duke appeared first upon the scene, accompanied by Casimir. The latter pointed out to him a path through the trees along which Zâra el Khalâ habitually strolled, and showed him the point at which she usually rejoined the Hindu, who followed along the road with the car. They retired.

I seated myself beneath a tree from whence I could watch the path and the road, and began to partake of the repast which I had brought with me.

At about three o'clock the dancer's car appeared, and the girl, veiled as usual, stepped out. Having exchanged a few words with the Indian, she began to walk slowly toward me, sometimes pausing to watch a bird in the boughs above her, and sometimes to examine some plant growing beside the way. I ate cheese from the point of a clasp-knife and drank wine out of the bottle.

Suddenly she saw me. She had cast her veil aside in order to enjoy the cool and fragrant air. As she stopped and regarded me doubtfully where I sat, I saw her beautiful face—undefiled now by make-up, and unspoiled by the presence of garish Eastern ornaments. *Nom d'un nom*, but she was truly a lovely woman!

My heart went out in sympathy to the poor grand duke. Had I received such a mark of favor from her as he had received, and had I then been scorned as now she scorned him, I should have been desperate indeed.

Coming around a bend in the path, she stood only a few paces away, looking at me. I touched the peak of my cap.

"Good day, *mademoiselle*," I said. "The weather is very beautiful."

"Good day," she replied.

I continued to eat cheese, and, reassured, she walked on past me. Twenty yards beyond the grand duke was waiting. As I laid down my knife upon the paper that had been wrapped around my bread and cheese, and raised the bottle to my lips, the enamored nobleman stepped out from the trees and bowed low before Zâra el Khalâ.

She started back from him—a movement of inimitable grace, like that of a startled gazel. Even before I had time to get upon my feet she had raised a little silver whistle to her lips and blown a short, shrill note.

The grand duke, endeavoring to seize her hand, was pouring out voluble expressions

of adoration in execrable French, and Zâra el Khalâ was retreating step by step. She had quickly thrown the veil about her face.

I heard the pad of swiftly running feet. If I was to intervene before the arrival of the Hindu, I must act rapidly. I raced along the path and thrust myself between the grand duke and the girl.

"*Mademoiselle*," I said, "is this gentleman annoying you?"

"How dare you, low pig?" cried the grand duke, and with a sweep of his powerful arm he hurled me aside.

"Thank you," replied Zâra el Khalâ, with great composure; "but my servant is here."

As I turned, Chunda Lal hurled himself upon the grand duke from behind. I have never seen such an expression in a man's eyes as showed in the eyes of the Hindu at that moment. They blazed like those of a tiger, and his teeth were bared in a savage grin which I cannot describe. His lean body seemed to shoot through the air, and he descended upon his burly adversary as a jungle beast falls upon its prey. Those long, brown fingers clasp his neck, the grand duke fell forward upon his face.

"Chunda Lal!" said the dancer.

Kneeling, his right knee thrust between the shoulder-blades of the prostrate man, the Hindu looked up, and I read murder in those glaring eyes. That he was an accomplished wrestler—or perhaps a strangler—I divined from the helplessness of the grand duke, who lay inert, robbed of every power except that of his tongue. He was swearing savagely.

"Chunda Lal!" said Zâra el Khalâ again.

The Hindu shifted his grip from the neck to the arms of his victim. He pinioned the grand duke as is done in jiu-jitsu, and forced him to stand upright. It was a curious spectacle, the impotence of this burly nobleman in the hands of his slender adversary.

As they swayed to their feet, I thought I saw the glint of metal in the Indian's right hand; but I could not be sure, for my attention was diverted. At this moment Casimir appeared upon the scene, looking badly frightened.

Suddenly releasing his hold altogether, and glaring into the empurpled face of the grand duke, the Hindu shot out one arm and pointed with a quivering finger along the path.

"Go!" he said.

The grand duke clenched his fists, looked from face to face, as if calculating his chances, and then shrugged his shoulders. Very deliberately he wiped his neck and wrists, where the Indian had held him, with a large silk handkerchief, and threw the handkerchief on the ground. I saw a speck of blood upon the silk. Without another glance he walked away, Casimir following sheepishly. It is needless, perhaps, to add that Casimir had not recognized me.

I turned to the dancer, touching the peak of my cap.

"Can I be of any assistance to *mademoiselle*?" I asked.

"Thank you, no," she replied.

She placed five francs in my hand and set off rapidly through the trees in the direction of the road, her ferocious but faithful attendant at her heels. I stood scratching my head and looking after her.

That afternoon I posted a man acquainted with Hindustani to tap any message that might be sent to or from the café used by Chunda Lal. I learned that the grand duke had taken a stage box at the Théâtre Coquerico, and I decided that I would be present also. A great surprise was in store for me.

By this time Zâra el Khalâ had established a reputation extending beyond those circles from which the regular patrons of the Coquerico were drawn. Indeed, her fame had begun to penetrate to all parts of Paris. You will remember that it was the extraordinary circumstance of her remaining at this obscure place of entertainment so long which had first interested me in the lady. I had learned that she had rejected a number of professional offers. As I have already stated, I had assured myself of this unusual attitude by presenting the card of a well-known Paris agency, and being refused admittance.

Now, as I leaned upon the rail at the back of the auditorium and the time for the dancer's appearance grew near, I could not fail to observe that there was a sprinkling of evening dress in the stalls, and that the two boxes already occupied boasted the presence of parties of well-known men of fashion. Then the grand duke entered, just as a troupe of acrobats finished their performance. Zâra el Khalâ was next upon the program. I glanced at the grand duke, and thought that he looked pale and unwell.

The tableau curtain fell, and the manager

appeared behind the footlights. He, also, appeared to be much perturbed.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I greatly regret to announce that Mlle. Zâra el Khalâ is indisposed and unable to appear. We have succeeded in obtaining the services—"

Whose services he had succeeded in obtaining I never heard, for the rougher section of the audience rose at him like a menacing wave. They had come to see the Egyptian dancer, and they would have their money back! It was a swindle! They would smash the theater!

If one had doubted the great and growing popularity of Zâra el Khalâ, this demonstration must have proved convincing. Looking over the heads of the excited audience, I saw the grand duke rise as if to retire. The other box parties were also standing up and talking angrily.

"Why was it not announced outside the theater?" some one shouted.

"We did not know until twenty minutes ago!" cried the manager in accents of despair.

I hurried from the theater and took a taxicab to the dancer's hotel. Running into the hall, I thrust a card in the hand of a *concierge* who stood there.

"Announce to Mlle. Zâra el Khalâ that I must see her at once," I said.

The man smiled and returned the card to me.

"Mlle. Zâra el Khalâ left Paris at seven o'clock, *monsieur!*"

"What?" I cried. "Left Paris?"

"But certainly. Her baskets were taken to the Gare du Nord an hour earlier by her servant, and she went off by the express for Calais. The theater people were here asking for her an hour ago."

I hurried to my office, to obtain the latest reports from my men. I had lost touch with them, you understand, during the latter part of the afternoon and evening.

I found the utmost confusion there. They had been seeking me all over Paris to inform me that Zâra el Khalâ had left. Two men had followed her, and had telephoned from Calais for instructions. She had crossed by the night mail for Dover. It was already too late to instruct the English police.

For a few hours I had relaxed my usual vigilance—and this was the result. What could I do? Zâra el Khalâ had committed no crime, but her sudden flight—for it

looked like flight, you will agree—was highly suspicious.

As I sat there in my office, filled with all sorts of misgivings, in ran one of the men engaged in watching the grand duke. The nobleman had been seized with illness as he left his box at the Coquerico, and had died before his car could reach his hotel.

#### XIV

A CONVICTION burst upon my mind that a frightful crime had been committed—by whom, and for what purpose, I knew not.

I hastened to the hotel of the grand duke. Tremendous excitement prevailed there, of course. There is no more certain way for a great personage to court publicity than to travel incognito. Wherever "M. de Stahler" had appeared, all Paris had cried:

"There goes the Grand Duke Ivan!"

Now, as I entered the hotel, press, police, and public were demanding:

"Is it true that the grand duke is dead?"

Just emerging from the lift I saw Casimir. He failed to recognize me, for he had never seen me undisguised.

"My good man," I said, "are you a member of the suite of the late grand duke?"

"I am, or was, the valet of M. de Stahler, *monsieur*," he replied.

I showed him my card.

"To me, M. de Stahler is the Grand Duke Ivan. What other servants had he with him?" I asked, although I knew very well.

"None, *monsieur*."

"Where and when was he taken ill?"

"As he left the Théâtre Coquerico, Montmartre, at about a quarter past ten o'clock to-night."

"Who was with him?"

"No one, *monsieur*. His highness was alone in a box. I had instructions to call with the car at eleven o'clock."

"Well?"

"The theater management telephoned at a quarter past ten to say that his highness had been taken ill, and that a physician had been sent for. I went at once, in the car, and found him lying in one of the dressing-rooms, to which he had been carried. A medical man was in attendance. The grand duke was unconscious. We moved him to the car—"

"We?"

"The doctor, the theater-manager, and myself. The grand duke was then alive,

the physician declared, although he seemed to me to be already dead. Just before we reached the hotel, the physician, who was watching his highness anxiously, cried:

"Ah, *mon Dieu!* It is finished. What a catastrophe!"

"He was dead?"

"He was dead, *monsieur.*"

"Who has seen him?"

"They have telephoned for half the doctors in Paris, *monsieur*, but it is too late."

He was affected, the good Casimir. Tears welled up in his eyes.

I mounted in the lift to the apartment in which the grand duke lay. Three doctors were there, one of them being he of whom Casimir had spoken. Consternation was written on every face.

"It was unquestionably his heart," I was assured by the doctor who had been summoned to the theater. "We shall find that he suffered from heart disease."

They were all agreed upon the point.

"He must have sustained a great emotional shock," said another.

"You are convinced that there was no foul play, gentlemen?" I asked.

They were quite unanimous on the point.

"Did the grand duke make any statement at the time of the seizure which would confirm the theory of a heart attack?" I next inquired.

No. It appeared that he had fallen down unconscious outside the door of his box, and from this unconsciousness he had never recovered. Depositions of witnesses, medical evidence, and other documents are available for the guidance of any one who cares to see them. As is well known, the death of the grand duke was ascribed to natural causes, and it seemed as if my trouble would, after all, prove to be in vain.

Leaving the hotel, on the night of the grand duke's death, I joined the man who was watching the café telephone. There had been a message during the course of the evening, but it had been for a Greek cigarette-maker, and it referred to the theft of several bales of Turkish tobacco—useful information of a minor kind, but of little interest to me. I knew that it would be useless to question the man Miguel, although I strongly suspected him of being a member of the Scorpion's organization. Any patron of the establishment enjoyed the privilege of receiving private telephone-calls at the café on payment of a small fee.

A man of less experience in obscure

criminology might now have assumed that he had been misled by a series of striking coincidences. Remember, there was not a shadow of doubt in the minds of the medical experts that the grand duke had died from syncope. His own professional adviser had sent written testimony to show that there was hereditary heart trouble, although not of a character calculated to lead to a fatal termination except under extraordinary circumstances. His own government, which had every reason to suspect that the grand duke's assassination might be attempted, was satisfied. *Eh bien!* I was not.

I next cross-examined the manager of the Théâtre Coquerico. He admitted that Mlle. Zâra el Khalâ had been a mystery throughout her engagement. Neither he nor any one else connected with the house had ever entered her dressing-room or held any conversation with her, except the stage-manager and the musical director. These two had talked with her about her music, and about lighting and other stage effects. She spoke perfect French, they said.

Such a state of affairs was almost incredible, but it was explained by the fact that the dancer, at a most modest salary, had doubled the takings of the theater in a few days, and had attracted capacity business throughout the remainder of her engagement. She had written from Marseilles, enclosing press-notices and other usual matter, and had been booked for one week. She had remained for two months, and might have remained forever, the manager assured me, at five times the salary.

A curious fact now came to light. In all her photographs Zâra el Khalâ appeared veiled in the Eastern manner—that is to say, she wore a white silk *yashmak*, which concealed all her face except her magnificent eyes. On the stage the veil was discarded; in the photographs it was always present.

And the famous picture which she had sent to the grand duke? He had destroyed it, in a fit of passion, on returning from the Bois de Boulogne after his encounter with Chunda Lal!

It is fate, after all—*kismet*—and not the wit of man, which leads to the apprehension of really great criminals. A tireless fate dogs their footsteps—a remorseless fate from which they fly in vain. Long after the funeral of the grand duke, and at a time when I had almost forgotten Zâra el Khalâ, I found myself one evening at

the opera with a distinguished French scientist. He chanced to refer to the premature death of Henrik Ericksen, the Norwegian electrician, which had occurred a few months earlier.

"A very great loss to the century, M. Max," he said. "Ericksen was as eminent in electrical science as the Grand Duke Ivan was eminent in the science of war. Both were stricken down in the prime of life, and under almost identical circumstances."

"That is true," I said thoughtfully.

"It would almost seem," he continued, "as if nature had determined to foil any further attempts to rifle her secrets and Providence had resolved to check mankind in the making of future wars. Only three months after the grand duke's death, the American admiral, Mackney, died at sea—you remember? Now, following Ericksen, Van Rembold, undoubtedly the greatest mining engineer of the century, and the only man who has ever produced radium in considerable quantities, is seized with illness at a friend's house and expires even before medical aid can be summoned."

"It is very strange," I admitted.

"It is uncanny!" said the scientist.

"Were you personally acquainted with the late Van Rembold?" I asked.

"I knew him intimately—a man of unusual charm, M. Max; and I have particular reason to remember his death, for I actually met him and spoke to him less than an hour before he died. We met on the street and exchanged only a few words, but I shall never forget the subject of our chat."

"How is that?" I inquired.

"Well, I presume Van Rembold's question was prompted by his knowledge of the fact that I had studied such subjects at one time; but he asked me if I knew of any race or sect in Africa or Asia who worshiped scorpions."

"Scorpions!" I cried. "Ah, *mon Dieu, monsieur*, say it again! Scorpions?"

"But yes, certainly—scorpions. Does it surprise you?"

"Did it not surprise you?"

"Undoubtedly. I could not imagine what had occurred to account for his asking so strange a question. I replied that I knew of no such sect. Van Rembold immediately changed the subject, nor did he revert to it; so that I never learned why he had made that singular inquiry."

You can imagine that this conversation afforded me food for reflection. While I could think of no reason why any one should plot to assassinate grand dukes, admirals, and mining engineers, the circumstances of the several cases were undoubtedly similar in a number of respects. But it was the remarkable question asked by Van Rembold which particularly aroused my interest.

Of course it might prove to be nothing more than a coincidence, but when one comes to consider how rarely the word "scorpion" is used, outside of those countries in which these creatures abound, it appears to be something more. Van Rembold, then, had had some occasion to feel curious about scorpions; the name Scorpion was associated with the Hindu follower of Zâra el Khalâ; and she it was who had brought the grand duke to Paris, where he had died.

It was a very fragile thread, but by following such a thread as this we are sometimes led to the heart of a labyrinth.

Beyond wondering if some sinister chain bound together this series of apparently natural deaths, I might have made no move in the matter, but something occurred which spurred me to action. Sir Frank Narcombe, the great English surgeon, collapsed in the foyer of a London theater and died shortly afterward. Here again I perceived a case of a notable man succumbing unexpectedly in a public place—a case parallel to that of the grand duke, of Ericksen, of Van Rembold. It seemed as if some strange epidemic had attacked men of science—yes, they were all men of science, even including the grand duke, who was said to be the most scientific soldier in Europe, and the admiral, who had perfected the science of submarine warfare.

The Scorpion! The name haunted me persistently—so much so that at last I determined to find out for myself if Sir Frank Narcombe had ever spoken about scorpions, and if there was any evidence to show that he had been interested in the subject.

I could not fail to remember, too, that Zâra el Khalâ had last been reported as crossing to England.

## XV

NEW SCOTLAND YARD had been advised that any reference to a scorpion, in whatever form it occurred, should be noted and

followed up, but nothing had resulted—which did not surprise me in the least. All that I had learned—and that was little enough—I had learned more or less by accident. But I came to the conclusion that a visit to London might be advisable.

I had caused a watch to be kept upon the man Miguel, whose establishment seemed to be a recognized resort of shady characters. I had no absolute proof, remember, that he knew anything of the private affairs of the Hindu, and no further reference to a scorpion had been made by any one using the café telephone. Nevertheless, I determined to give him a courtesy call before leaving for London; and to this determination I cannot doubt that once again I was led by Providence.

Attired in a manner calculated to enable me to pass unnoticed among the patrons of the establishment, I entered the place and ordered cognac. Miguel having placed it before me, I lighted a cigarette and surveyed my surroundings.

Eight or nine men were in the café, and two women. Four of the men were playing cards at a corner table; the others were distributed about the place, drinking and smoking. The women, who were flashily dressed, but who belonged to that order of society which breeds the apache, were deep in conversation with a handsome Algerian.

I recognized only one face in the café—that of a dangerous character, Jean Sach, who had narrowly escaped the electric chair in the United States, and who was well-known to the Service de Sûreté. He was smiling at one of the two women—the woman to whom the Algerian seemed to be more particularly addressing himself.

Another there was in the café who interested me as a student of physiognomy—a dark, bearded man, one of the card-players. His face was disfigured by a purple scar extending from his brow to the left corner of his mouth, which it had drawn up into a permanent snarl, so that he resembled an enraged and dangerous wild animal. Mentally I designated this person as Le Balafre—the man with the scar.

I had just made up my mind to depart when the man Sach arose, crossed the café, and seated himself insolently between the Algerian and the woman to whom the latter was talking. Turning his back upon the brown man, he addressed some remark to the woman, at the same time leering in her face. She instantly struck at Sach in fu-

rious anger, and dealt him so violent a blow that he fell to the floor.

Simultaneously the Algerian sprang up and drew a knife. Sach rolled away from him, and reached for his own knife, which he carried in a hip pocket.

Before he could draw it, Miguel, the quadroom proprietor, threw himself upon Sach and tried to pitch him into the street. But the latter, although a small man, was both agile and ferocious. He twisted out of the grasp of the huge quadroom and turned, raising the knife. As he did so, the Algerian deftly kicked it from his grasp, and left Sach to face Miguel unarmed. Screaming with rage, he sprang at Miguel's throat, and the two fell writhing upon the floor.

There could be only one end to such a struggle, of course, as the Algerian recognized by replacing his knife in his pocket and resuming his seat. Getting a firm hold upon Sach, Miguel raised him bodily above his head, as one has seen a professional weight-lifter raise a heavy dumb-bell. Thus he carried him, kicking and foaming at the mouth with rage, to the open door, and from the step he threw him into the middle of the street.

At this moment I noticed something glittering upon the floor close to the chair occupied by the Algerian. Standing up—for I had determined to depart—I crossed in that direction, stooped, and picked up the shining object. As my fingers touched it, so did my heart give a great leap. It was a *golden scorpion!*

Forgetful of my dangerous surroundings, I stood looking at the golden ornament in my hand, when it was suddenly and violently snatched from me. The Algerian, his brown face convulsed with rage, confronted me.

"Where did you find that charm?" he cried. "It belongs to me!"

"Very well," I replied. "You have it."

He glared at me with a ferocity which the incident scarcely seemed to merit, and exchanged a significant glance with some one who had approached, and who now stood behind me. Turning, I met a second black gaze—that of the quadroom, who, having restored order, had returned from the café door and now stood regarding me.

"Did you find it on the floor?" asked Miguel suspiciously.

"I did."

He turned to the Algerian.

"It fell when you kicked the knife from the hand of that pig," he said. "You should be more careful!"

Again they exchanged significant glances, but the Algerian resumed his seat and Miguel went behind the counter. I left the café, conscious of the fact that black looks pursued me.

The night was very dark, and as I came out on the sidewalk some one touched me on the arm. I turned in a flash.

"Walk on, friend," said the voice of Jean Sach. "What was it that you picked up from the floor?"

"A golden scorpion," I answered quickly.

"Ah!" he whispered. "I thought so! It is enough. They shall pay for what they have done to me—those two! Hurry away, friend, as I do."

Before I could say another word or strive to detain him, he turned and ran off along a narrow alley which at this point branched from the street.

I stood for a moment, nonplused, staring after him. By good fortune I had discovered more in ten minutes than I could have learned in ten months by the exercise of all my ingenuity and the resources of the Service de Sûreté! *Par la barbe du prophète!* Surely the kismet which dogs the footsteps of malefactors had once more assisted me!

Recollecting Sach's advice, I set off at a brisk pace along the street, which was dark and deserted, and which passed through a district marked red on the criminal map of Paris. Arriving at the corner, above which projected a lamp, I paused and glanced back into the darkness. I could see no one, but I thought I could detect the sound of stealthy footsteps following me.

The suspicion was enough. I quickened my pace, anxious to reach the crowded boulevard upon which this second street opened. I reached it unmolested. To throw any pursuer off the track I dodged and doubled repeatedly on the way to my flat. I arrived there about midnight, convinced that I had eluded pursuit—if indeed I had been pursued.

All my arrangements were made for leaving Paris. I telephoned to the assistant on duty in my office, instructing him to take certain steps in regard to the proprietor of the café and the Algerian, and to find the hiding-place of the man Jean Sach. I counted it more than ever important that I should go to London at once.

In this belief I was confirmed at the very moment when I boarded the Channel steamer at Boulogne.

As I stepped upon the deck, I found myself face to face with a man who was leaning upon the rail and apparently watching the passengers coming on board. He was a man of heavy build, dark and bearded, and his face was strangely familiar. Turning, as I lighted a cigarette, I glanced back at him in order to obtain a view of his profile. I knew him instantly, for now the scar was visible. It was Le Balafré—the man who had been playing cards in Miguel's café on the previous night!

I have sometimes been criticised, especially by my English confrères, for my faith in disguises. I have been told that no disguise is impenetrable to the trained eye. *Nom d'un nom!* I reply that there are many disguises, but few trained eyes. To my faith in disguise I owed the knowledge that a golden scorpion was the token of some sort of gang, society, or criminal group. To this same faith, which an English inspector of police once assured me to be a misplaced one, I owed, on boarding the steamer, my escape from detection by this big, bearded fellow, who may have been looking out for me.

Yet I began to wonder if after all I had escaped the shadowy pursuer whose presence I had suspected in the dark street outside the café, or if he had tracked me and learned my real identity. In any event, our rôles were about to be reversed.

At Folkestone, the scarred man took a seat in a third-class carriage of the London train. I found one in the adjoining compartment.

Arrived at Charing Cross, he stood for a time in the booking-hall, glanced at his watch, and then took up the hand-bag which he carried, and walked out into the station yard. I walked out also. He accosted a cabman; and as he did so I passed close behind him and overheard a part of the conversation.

"Bow Road Station, East? It's too far. What?"

I glanced back. Le Balafré was holding up a note—a pound note, apparently. I saw the cabman nod. Without an instant's delay I rushed up to another cabman, who had just discharged a passenger.

"To Bow Road Station, East!" I said to the man. "Double fare if you are quick!"

It would be a close race; but I counted on the aid of the fate that dogs the steps of wrong-doers. My cab was off first, and the driver had every reason for hurrying. From the moment when we turned out into the Strand until we arrived at our destination I saw no more of Le Balafré. My extensive baggage I must hope to recover later. Nothing else mattered, you understand, but the tracing of the man with the scar.

At Bow Road Station I discovered a telephone-box in a dark corner, which commanded a view of the street. I entered this box and waited. It was important that I should remain invisible. Unless my bearded friend had been unusually fortunate he could not well have arrived before me.

As it chanced, I had nearly six minutes to wait. Then, not ten yards away, I saw Le Balafré arrive and dismiss his cabman outside the station. There was nothing furtive in his manner; he was evidently satisfied that no one pursued him. He stood in the station entrance almost outside my box and lighted a cigar.

Placing his bag upon the floor, he lingered, looking to left and right, when suddenly a big closed car painted a dull yellow drew up at the sidewalk. It was driven by a brown-faced chauffeur whose nationality I found difficulty in placing, for he wore large goggles. But before I could determine upon my plan of action, Le Balafré crossed the sidewalk and entered the car, which glided smoothly away, going east.

A passing lorry obstructed my view, and I even failed to obtain a glimpse of the number on the plate; but I had seen something that repaid me for my trouble. As the scarred man walked up to the car, he had exhibited to the brown-skinned chauffeur some small object which he held in the palm of his hand—an object which glittered like gold!

#### XVI

BEHOLD me established in rooms in Battersea, where I lived in strict retirement during the day, while I permitted my beard to grow. I had recognized that this scorpion mystery was the biggest case which had ever engaged the attention of the Service de Sûreté, and I was prepared, if necessary, to devote my whole time for twelve months to its solution.

I had placed myself in touch with Paris, and had had certain papers and licenses

forwarded to me. A daily bulletin reached me, and one of these bulletins was sensational.

The body of Jean Sach had been recovered from the Seine. The man had been stabbed to the heart. Surveillance of Miguel and his associates continued unceasingly, but I had directed that no raids or arrests were to be made without a positive order from me.

I was possessed of a French motor-license and also that of a Paris taxi-driver, together with all the other documents necessary to establish the identity of one Charles Malet. Everything was in order. I presented myself—now handsomely bearded—at New Scotland Yard, and applied for a London license. I successfully passed the "knowledge of London" and other tests, and emerged a full-fledged cabman.

Already I had opened negotiations for the purchase of a dilapidated but serviceable cab owned by a small proprietor who had obtained a car of more up-to-date pattern. I completed the negotiations by paying down a certain sum, and arranged to garage my cab in the disused stable of a house near my rooms in Battersea.

I now found myself in a position to appear anywhere, at any time, without exciting suspicion. I could proceed swiftly from point to point, and could pursue any one, either walking or driving, whom it might please me to pursue. It was a *modus operandi* which had more than once served me well in Paris.

I had obtained particulars of the recent death of Sir Frank Narcombe. The circumstances attendant upon his end were so similar to those which had characterized the fate of the Grand Duke Ivan, of Van Rembold, and of the others, that I could not for a moment believe them to be due to mere coincidence. Acting upon my advice, Paris advised Scotland Yard to press for a *post-mortem* examination of the body, but the influence of Sir Frank's family was exercised to prevent this being carried out.

Meanwhile, I hovered around the houses, flats, clubs, and offices of every one who had been associated with the late surgeon, noting to what addresses they directed me to drive, and who lived at those addresses. In this way I obtained evidence sufficient to secure three judicial separations, but not a single clue leading to the Scorpion.

At every available opportunity I haunted the East End streets, hoping for a glimpse

of the big car and the brown-skinned chauffeur, or of my scarred man from Paris. I frequented all sorts of public bars and eating-houses used by foreign sailors and Asiatics. By day and by night I roamed about the dismal thoroughfares of that depressing district, usually with my flag down, to imply that I was engaged.

Such diligence seldom goes unrewarded. One evening, having discharged a passenger—an officer of a merchantman—at the East India Docks, as I was drifting, watchfully, back through Limehouse, I saw a large car pull up just ahead of me in the dark. A man got out, and the car was driven off.

Two courses presented themselves. I was not sure that this was the car for which I sought, but it strangely resembled that vehicle. Should I follow the car or the man? A rapid decision was necessary, and I followed the man.

That I had not been mistaken in the identity of the car shortly appeared. The man took out a cigar and, standing on the corner opposite the town hall, lighted it. I was close to him at the time, and by the light of the match, which he sheltered with his hands, I saw the scarred and bearded face. *Triomphe!* It was he!

Having lighted his cigar, he crossed the road and entered the saloon of a neighboring public house. Locking my cab, I also entered the saloon.

I ordered a glass of bitter beer and glanced around at the object of my interest. He had asked for a glass of brandy, and was contorting his hideous face as he sipped the beverage. I laughed.

"Have they tried to poison you, mister?" I said.

"Ah, *pardieu!* Poison—yes, it is poison!" he replied.

"You want to have it out of a bottle," I continued confidentially. "Try Martell's Three Stars."

He stared at me uncomprehendingly.

"I don't know," he said haltingly. "I have very little English."

"Oh, that's it!" I cried, speaking French with a barbarous accent. "You only speak French?"

"Yes, yes," he replied eagerly. "It is so difficult to make oneself understood. This spirit is not cognac; it is some kind of petrol!"

Finishing my bitter, I ordered two glasses of good brandy from the bartender and placed one before Le Balafré.

"Try that," I said, continuing to speak in French. "You will find it better."

He sipped from his glass, and agreed that I was right. We chatted together for ten minutes and had another drink, after which my dangerous-looking acquaintance wished me good night and went out.

The car had come from the west, and I strongly suspected that my man either lived in the neighborhood or had come there to keep an appointment. Leaving my cab outside the public house, I followed him on foot down Three Colt Street to Ropemaker Street, where he turned into a narrow alley leading to the riverside.

The alley was straight and empty, and I dared not follow farther until he had reached the far corner. I heard his footsteps pass right to the end; then the sound died away. I ran to the corner. The back of a wharf building—a high blank wall—faced a row of ramshackle tenements, some of them built of wood; but not a soul was in sight.

I reluctantly returned to the spot at which I had left the cab, and found a constable there who wanted to know what I meant by leaving a vehicle in the street unattended. I managed to enlist his sympathy by telling him that I had been in pursuit of a fare who had swindled me with a bad half-crown.

The ruse succeeded.

"Which street did he go down, mate?" asked the constable.

I described the street and described the scarred man. The constable shook his head.

"Sounds like one o' them foreign sailormen," he said. "But I don't know what he can have gone down there for. It's nearly all Chinese, that part."

His words came as a revelation; they changed the whole complexion of the case. Even as he spoke the word "Chinese," it dawned upon me that the golden scorpion which I had seen in the Paris café was of Chinese workmanship!

I started my engine and drove slowly to the street in which I had lost the trail of Le Balafré. I turned the cab so as to be ready to drive off at a moment's notice, and sat there, very much at a loss, wondering what my next move should be. How long I had been there I cannot say, when it began to rain heavily.

As I sat staring out at the dismal, rain-swept street, a man came along, saw the head-lamps of the cab, and stopped, peer-

ing toward me. Perceiving that I drove a cab, and not a private car, he came up and spoke to me.

"Are you disengaged?" he asked.

Whether it was that I sympathized with him—he had no top-coat or umbrella—or whether I was guided by fate, I know not; but as he spoke I determined to give up my dreary vigil for that night. *Pardieu*, but certainly it was fate again!

"Well, I suppose I am, sir," I said, and asked him where he wanted to go.

He gave an address not five hundred yards from my own rooms. I thought this so curious that I hesitated no longer.

"Jump in, sir," I said.

Still seeking in my mind for a link between the scorpion case and China, I drove off, and in less than half an hour, for the streets were nearly empty, arrived at my destination.

The passenger, whose name was Dr. Keppel Stuart, very kindly suggested a glass of hot grog, and I did not refuse his proffered hospitality. When I came out of his house again, the rain had almost ceased. Just as I stooped to crank the car, I thought I saw a shadowy figure moving near the end of a lane which led to the tradesmen's entrance of Dr. Stuart's house. A sudden suspicion laid hold upon me—a horrible doubt.

Having started my car and driven some twenty yards along the road, I leaned from my seat and looked back. A big man wearing a black waterproof coat was standing looking after me!

Remembering how cleverly I had been trailed from Miguel's café to my flat, in Paris—for I no longer doubted that some one had followed me on that occasion—I now perceived that I might again be the object of the same expert's attention. After rounding the next corner, I stopped my engine, jumped out, and ran back, hiding in some bushes which grew beside the gate of a large empty house.

I had only a few seconds to wait. A big closed car, running almost without sound, passed before me—and Le Balafré was leaning out of the window!

At last I saw my chance of finding the headquarters of the Scorpion—if that was the name of the mysterious organization that I was combating. Alas, the man of the scar was as swift to recognize that possibility as I! A moment after he had passed my stationary cab, and found it to

be deserted, his big car was off like the wind; and even before I could step out from the bushes the roar of his powerful engine was growing faint in the distance!

I was detected. Evidently I had to deal with dangerously clever people.

## XVII

THE following morning I spent at home, in my modest rooms, reviewing my position and endeavoring to adjust my plans in accordance with the latest development. My enemies had scored a point. What had aroused the suspicions of Le Balafré I knew not; but I was inclined to think that he had been looking from some window or peep-hole in the narrow street with the wooden houses when I had injudiciously followed him there.

On the other hand, the leakage might be in Paris, or in my correspondence system. The scarred man might have been looking for me, as I was looking for him. That he was looking for some one on the Channel boat I had not doubted.

He was aware, then, that Charles Malet, cabman, was watching him; but was he aware that Charles Malet was Gaston Max? Did he know where I lived? Also, did he perchance think that my meeting with Dr. Stuart in the slums of Limehouse had been prearranged? Clearly he had seen Dr. Stuart enter my cab, for he had pursued us to Battersea.

This course of reflection presently led me to a plan. It was a dangerous plan, but I doubted if I should ever find myself in greater danger than I was in already. *Nom d'un nom*, I had not forgotten the fate of poor Jean Sach!

That night, well knowing that I carried my life in my hands, I drove again to Limehouse Town Hall, and, again leaving my cab outside, went into the bar where I had previously met Le Balafré. If I had doubted that my movements were watched, I now had any such doubt most effectually dispelled; for not more than two minutes later the man with the scar came in and greeted me affably!

I had learned something else. He did not know that I had recognized him as the person who had tracked me to Dr. Stuart's house!

He invited me to drink with him, and I did so. As we raised our glasses, I made a move. Looking all about me suspiciously, I asked:

"Am I right in supposing that you have business in this part of London?"

"Yes," he replied. "My affairs bring me here sometimes."

"You are well acquainted with the neighborhood?"

"Fairly well—although, of course, I am a stranger to London."

I tapped him confidentially upon the breast.

"Take my advice, as a friend," I said, "and visit these parts as rarely as possible hereafter."

"Why do you say that?"

"It is dangerous. From the friendly manner in which you entered into conversation with me, I perceived that you are of a genial and unsuspicious nature. Very well! I warn you. Last night I was followed from a certain street not far from here to the house of a medical man who is a specialist in certain kinds of criminology, you understand."

He stared at me very hard, his teeth bared by that fearful snarl.

"You are a strange cabman!" he said.

"Perhaps I am—no matter about that! Take heed of my advice. I have things written here"—I tapped the breast of my tunic—"which will astonish all the world very shortly. I tell you, my friend, my fortune is made!"

I finished my drink, and ordered another for myself and one for my acquaintance. He was watching me doubtfully. Taking up my replenished glass, I emptied it at a draft and ordered a third. I leaned over toward the scarred man, resting my hand heavily upon his shoulder.

"Five thousand pounds," I whispered thickly, "has been offered for the information which I have here in my pocket. It is not yet complete, you understand; and because they may murder me before I obtain the rest of the facts, do you know what I am going to do with this?"

Again I tapped my tunic pocket. Le Balafre frowned perplexedly.

"I don't even know what you are talking about, my friend," he replied.

"I know what I am talking about!" I assured him, speaking more and more huskily. "Listen, then—I am going to take all my notes to my friend, the doctor, and leave them with him, sealed—sealed, you follow me? If I do not come back for them—in a week, shall we say?—he sends them to the police. I do not profit, you

think? No, *morbleu!* But there are some who hang!"

Emptying my third glass, I ordered a fourth and one for my companion. He checked me.

"No more for me, thank you," he said.

"I have—business to attend to. I will wish you good night."

"Good night!" I cried boisterously.

"Good night, friend! Take heed of my good advice!"

As he went out, the barman brought me my fourth glass of cognac, staring at me doubtfully. Our conversation had been conducted in French, but the tone of my voice had attracted attention.

"Had about enough, ain't you, mate?" he said. "Your ugly pal jibbed!"

"Quite enough!" I replied—in English now, of course. "But I've had a stroke of luck to-night, and I feel happy. Have one with me? This is a final."

On going out into the street I looked cautiously about me, for I did not expect to reach the house of Dr. Stuart unmolested:

I credited Le Balafre with sufficient acumen to distrust the genuineness of my intoxication, even if he was unaware of my real identity. I seldom make the mistake of underestimating an opponent's wit. While acting on the assumption that the scarred man knew me to be forcing his hand, I recognized that whether he believed me to be drunk or sober, Gaston Max or another, his line of conduct must be the same. He would believe that I actually designed to lodge my notes with Dr. Stuart, and would endeavor to prevent me from doing so.

I could detect no evidence of surveillance whatever, and, cranking my engine, I mounted and drove off. More than once, as I passed along Commercial Road, I stopped and looked back; but, so far as I could make out, no one was following me. The greater part of my route lay along populous thoroughfares, and of this I was not sorry; but I did not relish the prospect of Thames Street, along which presently my course led me. That thoroughfare, at night, is almost entirely deserted.

Shortly after turning into it, I pulled up. *Pardieu*, I was disappointed! It seemed as if my scheme had miscarried. I could not understand why I had been permitted to go unmolested, and I intended to walk

back to the corner for a final survey before continuing my journey.

The survey was never made. As I stopped the cab and prepared to descend, a faint sound, almost in my ear, set me keenly on the alert. In the nick of time I ducked—just as the blade of a long knife flashed past my head, ripping its way through my cloth cap!

That movement had saved my life, for otherwise the knife must have entered my shoulder and pierced to my heart.

Some one was hidden in the cab! He had quietly opened one of the front windows, and had awaited a suitable opportunity to stab me. Now, recognizing failure, he leaped out on the near side as I lurched and stumbled from my seat, and ran off like the wind. I never so much as glimpsed him.

"*Mon Dieu!*" I muttered, raising my hand to my head, from which blood was trickling down my face. "The plan succeeds well!"

I bound a handkerchief as tightly as possible around the wound in my scalp, and put my cap on to keep the bandage in place. The wound was only a superficial one, and except for the bleeding I suffered no great inconvenience from it.

I had now a legitimate reason for visiting Dr. Stuart, and as I drove on toward Battersea I was modifying my original plan in accordance with unforeseen conditions.

It was long past Dr. Stuart's hours of consultation when I arrived at his house, and the servant showed me into a waiting-room, informing me that the doctor would join me in a few minutes. As soon as she left me I took from the pocket of my tunic the sealed envelope which I had intended to lodge with the doctor. *Morbleu*, it was stained with blood, which had trickled down from the wound in my scalp!

Actually, you will say, there was no reason why I should place a letter in the hands of Dr. Stuart; my purpose would be equally well served by *pretending* that I had done so. Ah, but I knew that I had to deal with clever people—with artists in crime—and it behooved me to be an artist also. I had good reason to know that their system of espionage was efficient, and the slipshod way is ever the wrong way.

The unpleasantly sticky letter I returned to my pocket, looking around me for some means of making up a packet that might do duty as a substitute. Beyond a curtain draped over a recess at one end of the

waiting-room I saw a row of bottles, a box of lint, and other medical paraphernalia. This was the doctor's dispensary. Perhaps I might find there an envelope.

I crossed the room and looked around me again. Immediately around the corner, on a level with my eyes, I saw some fools-cap envelopes and a stick of black sealing-wax. *Bien!*

All that I now required was a stout sheet of paper to enclose in one of the envelopes; but not a scrap of paper could I find, except the blood-stained letter in my pocket—toward which I had formed a strong antipathy. I had not even a newspaper in my possession. I thought of folding three or four envelopes, but there were only six in all, and the absence of so many might be noted.

Drawing aside a baize curtain which hung from the bottom shelf, I discovered a number of old cardboard boxes. It was sufficient. With a pair of surgical scissors I cut out a piece from the lid of one and thrust it into an envelope, gumming down the lapel. At a little gas-jet intended for the purpose I closed both ends with wax, and—singular coincidence!—finding a Chinese coin fastened to a cork lying on the shelf, my sense of humor prompted me to use it as a seal. Finally, to add to the verisimilitude of the affair, I borrowed a pen that rested in a bottle of red ink, and wrote upon the envelope the number "30," that day being the thirtieth day of the month.

It was well that the artist within me had dictated this careful elaboration, as became evident a few minutes later, when the doctor appeared at the head of a short flight of stairs and requested me to step up into his consulting-room. It was a small room, so that the window, over which a linen shade was drawn, occupied nearly the whole of one wall.

As Dr. Stuart, having examined the cut on my scalp, descended to the dispensary for lint, the habits of a lifetime asserted themselves.

I quickly switched off the light and peeped out of the window around the edge of the shade, which I drew slightly aside. In the shadow of the wall upon the opposite side of the narrow lane a man was standing. I turned on the light again. The watcher should not be disappointed!

My skull being dressed, I broached the subject of the letter, which I said I had

found in my cab after the accident that caused my injury.

"Some one left this behind to-day, sir," I said; "perhaps the gentleman who was with me when I had the accident; and I've got no means of tracing him. He may be able to trace me, though, or he may advertise. It evidently contains something valuable. Would you mind taking charge of it for a week or so, until it is claimed?"

He asked me why I did not take it to Scotland Yard.

"Because," said I, "if the owner claims his property from Scotland Yard, he is less likely to be generous than if he gets it direct from me."

"But what is the point," asked Dr. Stuart, "in leaving it here?"

I explained that if I kept the letter I might be suspected of an intention of stealing it, whereas, if there was any inquiry, he could certify that I had left it in his charge. He seemed to be satisfied, and asked me to come into his study for a moment.

The man in the lane was probably satisfied, too. I had stood three paces from the table-lamp all the time, waving the letter about as I talked, and casting a bold shadow on the linen blind!

The first thing that struck me as I entered the doctor's study was that the French windows, which opened on a sheltered lawn, were open. I acted accordingly.

"You see," said Dr. Stuart, "I am enclosing your precious letter in this big envelope, which I am sealing."

"Yes, sir," I replied, standing at some distance from him, so that he had to speak loudly. "And would you mind addressing it to the Lost Property Office?"

"Not at all," said he, and did as I suggested. "If not reclaimed within a reasonable time, it will be sent by post to Scotland Yard."

I edged nearer to the open window.

"If it is not reclaimed," I said loudly, "it goes to Scotland Yard—yes!"

"Meanwhile," concluded the doctor, "I am locking it in this private drawer in my bureau."

"It is locked in your bureau—very good!" I said, and took my leave of the kindly doctor.

Knowing—and I knew it well—that some of my enemies were watching, I do not pretend that I felt at my ease as I drove around to the empty house in which I garaged my

cab. My inquiry had entered upon another stage, and Charles Malet was about to disappear from the case. I was well aware that if he failed in his vigilance for a single moment he might well disappear from the world!

The path that led to the stables was overgrown with weeds and flanked by ragged bushes. Weeds and grass sprouted between the stones paving the little yard, although they were withered to a great extent by the petrol recently spilled there.

Having run the cab into the yard, I alighted and looked around the deserted grounds, mysterious in the moonlight. Company would have been welcome, but, except for a policeman who had stopped and chatted with me on one or two evenings, I always had the stable to myself at night.

I determined to run the cab into the stable and lock it up without delay, for it was palpably dangerous in the circumstances to remain longer than necessary in that lonely spot.

Hurriedly I began to put out the lamps. I unlocked the stable doors, and stood looking all about me again. I was dreading the ordeal of driving the cab those last ten yards into the garage, for while I had my back to the wilderness of bushes it would be an easy matter for any one hiding there to come up behind me.

Nevertheless, it had to be done. Seating myself at the wheel, I drove into the narrow building, stopped the engine, and peered cautiously around toward the bright square formed by the open doors. Nothing was to be seen. No shadow moved.

A magazine pistol held in my hand, I crept, step by step, along the wall until I stood just within the opening.

I could hear a sound of quick breathing! There was some one waiting outside!

Dropping quietly down upon the pavement, I slowly protruded my head around the angle of the brick wall at a point not four inches above the ground. I knew that whoever waited would be sure to have his eyes fixed upon the doorway at the level of a man's head.

Close to the wall, a pistol held in his left hand and an upraised sand-bag in his right, stood Le Balafre. His eyes gleamed savagely in the light of the moon, and his teeth were bared in that fearful wolfish snarl; but he had not seen me.

*(To be continued in the March number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)*

# The Littlest Girl

BY R. N. WALL

Illustrated by R. F. Schabelitz

IT was close upon five o'clock of a raw April afternoon that Hartwell Warren, travel-stained and tired, dropped from a street-car in front of the Warren Wheel Works and lugged his bag up the steps. He straightened as he entered the outer office, and a smile swept over his worn face in response to the greetings of his little office force.

Belk, the office-manager, rose. He was middle-aged and sandy, with the pasty complexion of a man who does not exercise.

"Any luck?" he asked, holding out a pudgy hand.

Warren shook his head.

"Come along to my room and I'll tell you about it."

In his private office Warren let his bag fall to the floor and slumped into a chair. He was a tall man, not much beyond thirty, with a thin, pleasant face that would have been boyish had it not looked so tired. He leaned back, swung his long legs across a corner of his desk, and lit a cigarette.

"I reckon we're beaten!" he told Belk, who had planted himself opposite. "By the way, where's Miss Dane?" he added, with a glance toward the vacant desk of his secretary.

"She's out somewhere," grumbled Belk, his puffy but not unkindly face stiffening.

"You don't like her very well, do you, Andrew?" asked Warren quizzically.

"Yes, I do," Belk answered in a grievous tone. "Only—"

Light feet raced across the office outside, the door burst open, and a girl entered. In her spindle-heeled pumps she was barely five feet tall—a little thing, roundly slender. Her hair was brown, the color of her big eyes; her mouth crinkled at the corners, and to the winning expression of her whole small face her slightly tilted nose added something gay and audacious.

"I'm sorry I was out—I had an errand,"

she began breathlessly. "Did you have a good trip?" Her brown eyes searched Warren's face. "Did things come out all right?"

Warren gravely shook his head. Gladys Dane caught her breath. Belk shot a swift glance at Warren from beneath his sandy brows, rested his eyes a moment upon the girl, and let his gaze fall to the floor.

"Nothing doing, eh?" he murmured in colorless tones.

"Lynch won't budge," explained Warren. "I told him we couldn't deliver wheels any longer at the old price. He said we'd have to conform to our contract or take our medicine. He offers to buy the business. He will take over our affairs, settle our obligations, give us ten thousand dollars' worth of Universal stock, and make me manager here at five thousand a year."

"And me—the rest of us?" Belk questioned, picking up a ruler and balancing it thoughtfully.

"You'd all be provided for, of course. I wouldn't stand for anything else—if I were going to accept."

"I should hope you wouldn't!" burst out Miss Dane, who had seated herself at her own small desk. "He's a grasping old pirate!"

"Seems to me a pretty good way out of the hole we're in," Belk disagreed, his pale eyes still averted. "Lynch is liberal enough in his own way. You didn't accept?"

"I told him to go to thunder!" cried Warren fiercely. For an instant his thin face glowed with driving power, and he swung his big fist—the strong, sinewy hand of a working man—down upon the desk. "I want to live my own dreams!"

"I'm glad you didn't close with him." Miss Dane's voice expressed a curious relief. "I feel sure that something better will turn up—"

"Why should you think that?" rasped Belk. "I s'pose you've made up your mind

what you want to do, Hart, but it seems to me that the sooner we give in the better. I hoped Lynch would ease up on us; but if he won't, an honorable surrender beats bankruptcy all hollow. We don't want to go through that. You're young yet, but think of me—"

"I do, Andrew. I'll protect you, in any case," Warren assured him. "I'll take over your stock myself."

"Where'll you get the money? I got the family to think of," Belk protested peevishly. "I don't like the idea of being connected with a failure. I ain't thinking so much about the money loss as of the dishonor."

He looked very virtuous, the stoutish, sandy man, with his soft, good-natured face and pale eyes.

"Belk, I can't give it up!" cried Warren passionately. He threw away his cigarette and attacked another with nervous puffs. "I've put my heart and soul into the Warren wheel, and I'll make it myself or bust!"

"You'll bust, then," declared Belk, and fell to twiddling his thumbs.

Miss Dane, oblivious to Belk's snub, seemed thoughtful.

"If we're beaten, why not see if some one else wouldn't make us a better offer than Lynch?" she ventured.

"Who else would touch the proposition the way we're tied up?" demanded Belk. He turned to Warren. "Did you turn Lynch down cold?"

"He wouldn't let me," Warren explained. "He has other business here to-morrow, and he's going to drop in for my final answer. Oh," he groaned, "if we could just rake up a little money! The contract has only three months more to run. Once filled, we could get a big price for our goods in any market."

"That reminds me," said Belk softly, "that I took an order to-day."

"When?" asked Miss Dane in surprise.

"While you were at lunch," growled Belk. "The Mears Plow Works phoned in and wanted to know if we could make them five thousand forty-two-inch grooved wheels of the regular pattern. I told 'em we could, at three dollars and fifty cents each."

"That shows what we're missing!" cried Warren, almost in agony. "If we could hang on we'd get rich; but what in time were you thinking of, Belk, even to dally with an outside order? We're barely getting out enough to supply the Universal."

"I thought the profit would help," Belk defended.

"If we tried to fill the Mears order we'd have to default on the Universal contract and put ourselves exactly where Lynch wants us."

"Don't you think we dare take a chance, Hart, on shipping Mears and getting out the Universal stuff a little late for once?"

"I'd take any reasonable chance, Andrew, but that would be sheer folly. I'll write Mears at once and decline the order."

"All right," said Belk grumpily, and shuffled out.

## II

It was getting dusk in the dingy office, and Warren reached up and turned on the light over his desk as Miss Dane gathered up her pencils and note-book.

She wore a black serge skirt and a white shirt-waist—a severely simple costume, and yet, upon her, it seemed dainty and alluring. Warren smiled at her with something of his old manner as she settled herself opposite. She had been with him since the formation of the company, and he was very fond of her in his simple and straightforward way. Sometimes he had teased her by calling her the Littlest Girl, for she was just a bit sensitive about her diminutive size, but to-night he was in no teasing mood. The future looked very grim.

Weary as he was, the grace and sweetness of the girl were like balm to Warren. She was so small and round and soft looking that it flashed upon him instinctively how easily he could cuddle her up in his arms, and how very restful it would be to forget all the burden and the strain—

And then Warren realized how outrageous his thoughts were. He consoled himself by thinking that they would not have come if he had not been so tired, and resolutely pushed them away to concentrate upon the matter in hand.

He lit a fresh cigarette and picked up the order that Belk had tiptoed in and placed upon his desk.

"To your old employers, the Mears Plow Works," Warren began. Miss Dane's pencil gave the slightest jerk. "On account of the difficulty in securing material and the priority of certain contracts, we are forced to decline the order that you were kind enough to offer us to-day—"

Belk interrupted.

"Mr. Mears wants to speak to Miss



"I RECKON WE'RE BEATEN!"

Dane on the phone," he announced with the suspicion of a smirk.

"Mears!"

Warren looked at Miss Dane in astonishment. The girl dropped her pencil, and a slow flush suffused her clear cheeks. Her small face twisted into a frown as she pushed back her chair, and with a muttered, "Excuse me, please!" scurried out.

"Why didn't you have the call put through?" Warren asked Belk, nodding toward the extension phone upon his desk.

"The switchboard girl has gone. And," Belk added, just a trifle maliciously, "I thought maybe they wanted to talk together private. I think there's something going on between 'em."

"What do you mean?" demanded Warren, leaning forward.

Belk was instantly apologetic.

"Why, I don't mean anything, but this ain't the first talk they've had lately," he volunteered. "You know she came from him to us; her folks moved over here about the time we started up, and Mears recommended her. It struck me that, knowing the shape we're in, Miss Dane might be looking for a soft place to drop."

"I don't believe it!" denied Warren indignantly. "I'd trust her in anything!"

"Yes, you would; and you've spoiled her," Belk complained. "Came here as a stenographer, and now you let her call herself 'assistant to the president.' As if the

president of a dinky company like this needed a titled assistant!"

Belk's flat voice became squeaky as his long-repressed anger rose. Warren smiled, half sadly, over his patent jealousy.

"Miss Dane has earned every consideration I have shown her," Warren returned. "She's a perfect secretary. She helps me in any number of ways, and she gets things done."

"Sure!" sneered Belk. "Just now she's getting herself a new job."

"Nonsense!" said Warren, but the bare idea made his heart a little sick.

"You ask her," Belk persisted.

"I will," retorted Warren.

He leaned back, amused; it was all so absurd. Yet a nameless irritation grew upon him. He would not acknowledge his annoyance to Belk.

"I don't believe it; but if she is, you couldn't blame her."

One couldn't; but it hurt him, just the same, even to imagine that Miss Dane should be so swift to abandon the sinking ship.

"I ain't blaming her; I'm just telling you," insisted Belk, and then withdrew as the girl came slowly back and took up her pad.

The aloof and thoughtful expression on Miss Dane's face disturbed Warren. She did not meet his questioning look. Warren waited a moment for the natural explanation, then spoke curtly, for he was not only spurred by the jealousy that an employer instinctively feels when he learns that an employee prefers another position, but deeply hurt in his more personal feelings.

"What did Mears want?" he blurted out.

"Oh, nothing much," the girl answered, with her quick flush. She seemed confused. "He—he just wanted to talk to me," she finished lamely.

Her words went into Warren like splinters of steel. He was a lonely man; and only with the hint of her leaving had he realized how much the companionship of the Littlest Girl mattered. He struggled against a rising tide of anger, which he knew was unreasonable, yet which he could not entirely check.

Miss Dane watched him anxiously. Warren, facing her, felt his anger fall away. Why shouldn't she do the best she could for herself? The Warren Wheel Works was about to pass into the limbo of vanished things, and what had he to offer?

"Why couldn't we fill the Mears order and get out the wheels for the Universal, too?" Miss Dane asked suddenly.

"We could, if we had the money to get the men and the material, but the banks won't let us have a cent. When we ran up this factory my head was full of fool dreams, and we figured on expansion, Belk and I. We've got plenty of floor space and a lot of idle machines. We've been using them to get repair parts from," Warren went on bitterly.

"A little shafting and some new belts would enable us to double our output, wouldn't it?"

"Yes; but where are the men and the money? We've got to give the Universal twenty-five thousand wheels a month, and if we fall down just once they'll sue."

"They want the patent?"

"The plant and patent both. If they can force us into a lapse, both will have to be sold, and they'll get them. I've fought as long as I can. I thought I could hold out three months longer, but I'm all in!"

He looked it, with his disordered hair, his eyes that showed the need of sleep, his nervous hands that fumbled for a cigarette.

The office had grown dark; the corners were solid banks of gloom. The two sat motionless in the circle of light beneath the plain green-shaded globe above Warren's cheap desk.

Belk slipped in, soft-footed and sleek.

"Anything more I can do to-night, Hart?" he mumbled.

Warren shook his head.

"Then I'll be getting home to the family. Better quit worrying and do as I tell you!"

Miss Dane waited until Belk had gone.

"What does he want?" she demanded, her eyes disdainful.

"He has advised me to accept Lynch's offer. He's worried over his investment, I suppose."

"How much stock has he?" Miss Dane wanted to know.

"Only five hundred dollars, but with his family, I suppose, that counts. It means more than money to me to quit."

His face was drawn with the strain and struggle; a world of weariness was in his eyes.

"I'm sick and tired of the whole business," Warren went on. "I've a good mind to tell Lynch that I won't ship him any more wheels at any price, and let him do whatever he blamed pleases!"

"Has the Universal an immediate use for the wheels, or are they stacking them up?" Miss Dane questioned.

"They need the wheels, all right," Warren assured her. "Food crops are so high that farmers are turning every acre they can, and the demand for riding-plows and cultivators was never greater."

"If they couldn't get any for several months it would bother them?"

"Bother is too mild."

"Mr. Warren, I believe I've got an idea!" the Littlest Girl hastily began.

Her big brown eyes glowed and her small chin looked determined.

"What is it?" asked Warren, half amused.

The girl colored at his obvious derision. Her bright look clouded; she shifted her position and stammered:

"I don't know—I'm not sure—let me think about it overnight."

Her face was wistfully eager, her eyes round, her lips parted, her funny little nose enticing.

"All right," said Warren dully. "Get that letter off to Mears and we'll go home."

### III

It was late when Warren reached the office in the morning. He had turned and twisted for hours, racking his poor, tired brain for a way out, before sleep had finally come. A new element disturbed him. From amusement at the thought that his little secretary could offer any aid, he came to puzzle over her conversation with Mears. Why had she seemed so confused and so reluctant to explain? It was strange how his thoughts hovered about her in this desperate crisis. Why should she care what happened, he thought bitterly, if she was going to desert him?

He was in so savage a mood when he entered the office, that even good old Belk seemed humped over his desk like a man with something to hide.

"Lynch showed up?" he asked Belk roughly.

The office-manager lifted his mild and pasty face.

"Not yet," he answered.

"Show him in when he does come," ordered Warren. "I might as well get it over with."

"Remember the wiser part, Hartwell," Belk advised. "No good kicking against the pricks!"

Miss Dane rose from her desk as Warren entered. She wore a fresh, gay gingham of checkered pink and green, with the immense pockets of the moment, in which she stuffed her hands in boyish fashion as she faced her employer. She colored at the sharpness of Warren's greeting, and it struck him that she seemed ill at ease. All Warren's perplexity at her attitude returned.

"Developed that idea you thought you had last night?" he snapped.

"Not entirely," she answered. Her brows contracted and her nose became alert and suspicious as she looked back over her shoulder. "Do you trust Mr. Belk?" she plumped out.

"Of course!" exclaimed Warren in amazement. "Why not?"

"Oh, because! He reminds me of a fat Maltese cat, and I hate 'em. Why did you choose him for a partner?"

"He was in the office of the Dedrick Machine Company, where I was working when I invented my wheel," Warren explained wonderingly. "He took an interest in the thing from the start. He helped me to get it patented, and advised me to sell the rights, but I wouldn't. There's where I was a chump. Then he suggested forming a company to make it, and practically engineered the whole deal. I don't know how I'd have managed without him."

"I don't think you've managed very well with him," said the Littlest Girl pertly.

"You mustn't talk like that!" Warren reproved her. "What have you against Mr. Belk?"

"Oh," she wavered, with her disarming smile, "I don't like the way he walks!"

"You don't understand, Miss Dane," said Warren severely. "I'm nothing but a roughneck mechanic, and I didn't know anything about office management or business in general. I had to lean on Belk. I can never be grateful enough. It hurts to think how badly this venture has turned out for him."

"Perhaps it won't," the Littlest Girl stated enigmatically. She sat down, her elbows upon the desk, rested her chin on her knuckles, and looked Warren squarely in the eyes. "This is my scheme," she began.

A knock interrupted. Belk opened the door and obsequiously ushered in the president of the Universal Implement Company, Mr. Lynch—a broad, bulky man, nearing sixty, with a bluff, jovial manner that in-

effectually qualified a heavy jaw and a cold, gray eye.

"Morning, Warren!" he beamed. "Ready to talk turkey?"

Over Mr. Lynch's broad shoulder Belk signaled to Miss Dane to follow him out,

"Mr. Lynch," Warren sparred, "I can sell my wheel in the open market for three dollars and fifty cents. I'm willing to continue supplying you in the agreed quantity, at three dollars, until the old contract expires, but I can't deliver any more at a



"CONTRACTS ARE NOT SCRAPS OF PAPER IN THIS COUNTRY YET, MY YOUNG FRIEND!"

but the girl gave him an impish grin and settled herself at her desk. The office-manager shook his head and shuffled out.

"I'm ready to talk," Warren answered Lynch, "but I won't sell out!"

"Man, be reasonable," urged Lynch, forcing his most jovial smile. "You've tied yourself up in a hard knot. You are on the verge of bankruptcy, and you can't complete your contract with us. Why not admit it?"

dollar and seventy-five cents. Will you grant me that increase, contract or no contract? I'm asking nothing unfair. You've doubled the price of your machines—why shouldn't I advance mine?

Lynch was tolerantly amused.

"Because I pay a good lawyer to draw my contracts, and they stipulate that my prices are subject to change without notice. Your contract doesn't."

"You hold me to the letter, then?" War-

ren grated, his tired features white and drawn.

"Sure I do—why not?" asked Lynch, his wide, red face frankly amazed. "Why should I forego a perfectly legitimate advantage? I'm a liberal man, Warren, but you are preposterous. To prove I want to be fair, I'll give you fifteen thousand for the business, but I won't abate a jot on the contract!"

"I won't sell out at any price!"

"That is silly!" retorted Lynch, calm and smooth. "If you won't accept my offer, just keep on shipping wheels."

Warren was driven to the ropes. He stared desperately at the anxious face of his secretary, who was at Lynch's left and a little behind him. She shook her head warningly, and her scarlet lips plainly formed a negative. Warren turned his eyes to the confidant Mr. Lynch.

"I won't furnish you another wheel at any price!" Warren snarled.

Lynch stared his amazement.

"No? What about your contract?"

"I'm going to break it."

Lynch roared with laughter.

"Contracts are not scraps of paper in this country yet, my young friend! I shall most certainly bring suit the moment you default on a shipment."

"Then," broke in Miss Dane's voice, clear, but a little shaky, "you'll have to sue a receiver. I'm a stockholder in this company, Mr. Lynch, and I'm dissatisfied with my investment. I shall apply for a receiver to-day!"

It was hard to say whether Lynch or Warren was the more startled. Warren gazed at the girl, unable to believe his ears. What colossal bluff was this? Lynch found his voice first.

"What sort of bunk are you trying on?" he yelled, his red face turning purple. "Who are you, anyhow, and how long have you been a stockholder?"

"That's no tone to use, sir!" cried Warren, springing fiercely to his feet, but the Littlest Girl waved him back.

"I bought Mr. Belk's stock last night," she said sweetly. "I've been here since the business was started, and I've always wanted to be a part of it. I thought when I bought it that you would prove reasonable, Mr. Lynch, and that it would be a good investment. If I was wrong, and you're going to be hard-hearted, I'll have to take steps to protect myself."

In one blinding flash of light Warren saw that he had been double-crossed. The girl's aspersions on faithful old Belk burst upon him, her appeals for delay, and, most illuminating of all, her conversation with Mears. Mears would be glad to get control of the wheel company. He was the man behind Miss Dane!

"Why, you—you—" Lynch was sputtering. "You want to tie things up so I can't get any wheels until the court untangles 'em, eh?"

Inspiration came to Warren as he hazily glimpsed the girl's plan. He would reckon with her and with Mears later; Lynch must be beaten off now.

"That's what will happen, Mr. Lynch," he said sternly, taking command again. "Either you can accept my proposition, or, by the time the affairs of this company are settled, you will have your factory piled to the roof with implements awaiting wheels!"

The seasoned Mr. Lynch recovered promptly. He leaned back in his chair, crossed his fat legs, and stared from Warren to Miss Dane. Then, to their dismay, he burst into such laughter that his fat body rocked with his mirth.

"Of all the crazy bluffs I ever had pulled on me, yours is the limit!" he jeered. "To begin with, we have a fair stock of wheels. Then, I know where to get more just as good as yours. Thirdly, I'm some man of law myself. You apply for a receivership, and as sure as there's a judge on the bench, in two weeks I'll have this factory turning out more wheels for the Universal than you're making now. Warren, you amuse me. You're as good as a musical comedy, you and your charming chorus!" He gave the Littlest Girl a leer that made her bite her lips. "Your scheme means flat ruin for yourselves without hurting me a mite," he went on.

There was a worried look in his eyes as he made the statement, but he kept on chuckling.

"We'll see about that," said Warren, his dry lips compressed. "I'll face ruin before I'll quit."

"Warren," laughed Lynch, "I admire your nerve. I never saw an inventor yet that had any sense, but I do like a good scrapper." He rose and teetered on his heels. "Don't throw yourself away, Warren," he urged, slapping him on the back. "Come in with me. I need single-minded young dunderheads who can't see but one

side of a proposition and don't know when they're licked!"

Warren shook his head. He felt limp, foolish, and physically sick. Belk had abandoned him and Miss Dane had betrayed him. He had fancied that she wanted a better position—and it was the business for which she had been scheming!

Lynch looked at his watch.

"Lunch-time already," he announced. "Say, I've laughed until I'm hungry. Come and eat with me, Warren. Perhaps I can hammer some sense into your skull yet!"

Warren mechanically accompanied the older man out. His mind was so numb and raw with pain that he scarcely cared where he went. His one thought was to get away from Miss Dane.

"Don't you give in!" she cried as he started out. "We can do better!"

"Better for you!" thought Warren bitterly, and did not answer.

#### IV

WARREN heard little of the soothing stream of words that Lynch poured out, nor did he notice the excellent meal that Lynch ordered. He saw the coarse, red face of his companion as through a haze.

He was still trying to comprehend Miss Dane's defection when he saw her enter the restaurant with a companion. They seated themselves at a table behind Lynch, directly opposite Warren, but out of speaking distance. As Warren recognized Miss Dane's escort, anger almost overwhelmed him, for the tall, well-dressed young man, with a pleasant face distinguished by clear gray eyes and a humorous mouth, was John Stanhope Mears, the president of the Mears Plow Works.

Warren had never hated any one in his life as he felt himself hating Mears. Everything that he, the rough, shabby mechanic, risen from the ranks, lacked, had been given to Mears, the well-born, well-groomed, polished gentleman. The hat and stick that Mears handed to the waiter, his chamois gloves, the scarab in his costly scarf, accentuated the contrast between them and deepened Warren's hatred.

Miss Dane looked up, met Warren's fixed stare, and nodded brightly. Warren simply glared. The girl flushed, bit her lip, and gave her attention entirely to her companion. Their heads drew together, their conversation became more animated, and Mears, drawing a gold-mounted pencil from

his pocket, began to figure on the back of a menu-card.

"You're about as responsive as a tombstone, Warren," Lynch suddenly blared at him. "Didn't you hear what I said?"

"No," retorted Warren angrily, "but whatever it was it makes no difference!"

He was utterly reckless. Why should he care?

They returned to the office, the deadlock unbroken. Warren continued sullen and silent, and Lynch began to let his arrogance show more plainly through his mask of jollity.

"Come, Warren!" he urged testily. "Don't be a fool! I'll make you my last offer. I'll give you twenty thousand dollars and a five-year contract as superintendent—"

"I don't want any more of your contracts," snapped Warren.

"You can have your own lawyer draw this one," suggested Lynch smoothly.

Warren stared moodily at the floor. The insistence of the older man was wearing him down; but the thing that took the fight out of him was the thought that there was nothing left to fight for.

Lynch, seeming to understand, bore down on him again.

"I can't get your objections, Warren," he boomed out in his hearty way. "I offer you a fine position and an honorable escape from a bad deal. Why not take it?"

Why not? He sagged back in his chair and felt for a cigarette. His lips opened to frame his capitulation. Then his desk phone rang; he lifted the receiver.

"Say, Mr. Warren," came the voice of the Littlest Girl breathlessly, "have you persuaded Mr. Lynch to play fair?"

"No," said Warren.

"You haven't given in, have you?"

"No," repeated Warren hopelessly, "but I might as well."

"Please don't do anything until I come," Miss Dane begged. "I'm at the bank. I'm coming right over, and I'm going to bring Mr. Mears with me. I want you to hear what he has to say."

A cynical smile twisted Warren's features. At the bank! Doubtless Mr. Mears was arranging to outbid Mr. Lynch. Well, it didn't matter; he might as well wait and make the best bargain he could.

"Warren," Lynch threatened, as the other replaced the receiver, "don't try any more fool games! I'll give you just ten



THE DOOR OPENED, AND THE LITTLEST GIRL APPEARED

minutes to make up your mind. You can either take a fair, liberal settlement, or I'll grind you to a pulp. Now, decide quick!"

Warren rose and walked listlessly to the window. He stared into the street, seeing nothing but the ashes of his dream.

The door opened, and the Littlest Girl appeared, her roguish face alive and eager. Mr. Mears followed her, leisurely removing his yellow gloves. Warren turned to them, his face a bitter mask with burning eyes.

"Mr. Warren, I think you know Mr. Mears," Miss Dane began. "Mr. Mears—Mr. Lynch."

Lynch nodded, black as a thunder-cloud. "I know Mr. Mears," he grunted. "What you doing over here, John?"

"Combining business with pleasure," smiled young Mr. Mears, with an inclination of his head toward Miss Dane. Then he turned to Warren. "Really, you all manage things in the most extraordinary

fashion," he drawled. "Your Mr. Belk phoned over yesterday and offered to sell us some wheels. I told him we'd take five thousand, and this morning I get a letter from you saying you can't ship."

"Belk asked you for the order?"

"Certainly," answered Mears. "Afterward I got to thinking about this Belk person, and I remembered an offer he made me three years ago, so I called up Miss Dane, and what she told me brought me over here."

"I imagined it had," said Warren curtly. He turned upon the girl with so furious a countenance that all the life and sparkle left her eyes. "What price does Mr. Mears offer?" he sneered. "And what commission do you get, Miss Schemer?"

"Oh!" she cried, and shrank back as if he had struck her. "You don't understand! Wait! Please send for Mr. Belk."

"What's all this gammon about?" Lynch broke in roughly.

Warren had pressed his bell and Belk slipped in, his soft face more pasty than ever, his pale eyes shifty.

"Mr. Warren," the girl charged abruptly, her voice tense, her small body all atremble, "there's the source of all our trouble!" She thrust a finger at Belk, as if to empale him. "He has been in Mr. Lynch's pay from the start. I suspected it before, but I couldn't be sure until to-day."

"Miss Dane!" gasped Warren.

"You're crazy!" snarled Belk.

"What in—" began Lynch.

"Miss Dane is quite correct," calmly interjected young Mr. Mears. His perfect self-possession dominated the knot of angry men. "Wait! Let her explain."

"I've suspected Mr. Belk a long time," said the Littlest Girl. "I saw that all the trouble we had pointed one way. I remembered that when I was with Mr. Mears, Belk had come to him with some proposition that had made him very angry. Now, Mr. Mears tells me that three years ago Belk made him the same proposition that we believe he made to Mr. Lynch—as Mr. Warren wouldn't sell his wheel, to get him to incorporate, jockey him into an iron-clad contract, and break him. Deny that, Mr. Belk, if you can!"

The office-manager started to open his flabby mouth, but Lynch sprang into the breach, cold and ferocious.

"Don't you say a word, Belk!" he ordered. "They can't prove any such fool

accusation. Keep your mouth shut. This concerns *me*! I'll sue the whole crew for slander after I have closed up this rat-trap of a factory!"

"If any one stands in the dock it will most likely be you," drawled Mears, entirely unmoved. "'Conspiracy in restraint of trade' is what the lawyer chaps call it, you know."

Warren had turned his pain-lined face toward Belk.

"Andrew," he groaned, "I trusted you so! I looked to you for guidance, left everything in your hands—"

"But, Hart," Belk protested feebly, "this ain't no proof—"

"I don't think I need any further proofs, Andrew," said Warren. "Looking back—I know!"

"I feel that I'm a whole lot to blame," put in young Mr. Mears cheerfully. "When this poor devil came to me I kicked him out, but I should have put Mr. Warren on his guard. So I'm going to make amends, as Miss Dane can tell you."

"Yes," said the Littlest Girl, her eyes shining, "Mr. Mears has given me an order for a hundred thousand wheels!"

"A hundred thousand!" Warren gasped. "We couldn't deliver the five thousand that Belk tried to trap us into shipping!"

"This is a different sort of a deal," explained Miss Dane blithely. "Mr. Mears and I have been to the bank, and they will lend us money on a big, safe, profitable contract like this. All we have to do is to fit up those idle machines, hire more men, complete the contract with these conspirators, and then we're free!"

Warren stared dumbly at her, hope and wonder growing in his eyes. There was a little silence, and then there followed the scraping of chairs. Unheeded, Lynch and Belk slunk from the room. With a smile of understanding, young Mr. Mears gathered up his hat and stick and followed them.

"Gladys," said Warren, "you may be the Littlest Girl, but you're the biggest thing in this business!"

"Oh," she said, her roguish nose a tilt, "I always knew that!"

He had risen and towered above her, his thin face boyishly eager, his eyes hungry for the need of her, but clear and clean. She met his gaze steadily, but the crimson grew upon her cheeks. Then, as his arms went around her, she yielded happily the soft and scarlet sweetness of her lips.

# The Soul of the Lamp

BY ARMSTRONG LIVINGSTON

Illustrated by George Wright

THEY sat together in the main room of the lighthouse, this old couple who had grown bent and gray in the service of the lamp, and they sat in silence, since there was that on their minds which would hardly brook discussion. The night was bitterly cold outside, and a raging November gale shrieked furiously as it rushed past; but the stout door and the double windows defied the searching blasts, and the flaming logs in the fireplace made the room almost uncomfortably hot. Nevertheless, as the long evening wore on, they came closer and closer to the leaping blaze, as if they hoped to draw some of its splendid cheer into their heavy hearts.

It was nearly midnight before the old man shook off the spell that bound them and glanced apprehensively at his wife. Then he moved his chair a little nearer to hers, and laid a wrinkled hand on her arm.

"Ye must stop broodin' over it, Molly," he urged gently. "Thinkin' about it only seems to make it worse. Our boy is in the Lord's care, an' we might better be on our knees than sittin' here dreamin'."

"He never done it, John! He never done it!"

"Of course not, Molly. He's quick of temper, an' he's not the man to suffer a wrong an' take it lyin' down, but he's no murderer. Our Charley is flesh of our flesh, an' I reckon he has our faults; but no child of yours, nor of mine for that matter, could ever bear the mark of Cain!"

"God forbid!"

"Young Leslie says he's satisfied with the jury. They're decent, solid men, he says, an' they won't convict a prisoner unless they're powerful sure about him first. An' he says the judge is fair an' won't give a mite of advantage to the State."

For the twentieth time she asked the question that haunted her mother heart.

"You say Charley's keepin' up his spirits?"

"He's all right, Molly. There's not a speck of yellow in that boy, an' he done more to cheer us than to give us trouble. The sheriff—Jim Burlin, you know—hasn't forgotten that me an' him's been friends for fifty years, an' he's done all he could to make the boy comfortable."

He did not add that the sheriff, in common with public opinion in general, held that Charley Bristed had "jest given that old crook Saunders what was comin' to him." He spared her the knowledge that on the eve of the trial most of those who knew the facts, and had followed the preliminary examination, were confident that on the morrow the prisoner would be convicted of murder in the first degree.

It was true that the evidence was only circumstantial, but it was damning. Chester Leslie, counsel for the defense, turned a bland and smiling face toward the reporters who interviewed him, but in private he looked a bit grave and worn. The verdict meant much to him, too, for he was a young man making his first appearance in a murder trial, and there was a reputation to be made or lost.

"You'd better get to bed, Molly," advised the old man. "It 'll be a hard day for you to-morrow."

"I couldn't sleep, John. It's my night to watch the light, an' you're tired out. If I have to stay awake, thinkin', I'd sooner do it here than in bed."

He did not reply, and they remained gazing silently into the fire. Presently he rose to seek his tobacco-pouch on the mantel, and the movement aroused her again from her thoughts. She waited until he had filled his pipe and resumed his seat before she spoke.

"John," she said, "I believe he'll get

off!" There was firm conviction in her voice. "It just can't be the other thing. We've been decent an' honest folk all our lives, an' the Lord won't desert us now!"

"I hope not, Molly."

"It seems to me that if everythin' else fails us, the light will help us out."

He turned toward her, a little startled, and regarded her with an expression of amazement that was not unmixed with fear. She read his mind, and laughed faintly.

"Don't worry, John—I'm not goin' mad, or anythin' like it; but first an' last we've tended this lamp for nigh on thirty years, an' durin' that time I've sat here a power of nights with nothin' but the machinery to keep me company. I've often thought that we don't know such a heap about these things. The Lord gives you an' me a soul, an' it's a wonderful thing, but we haven't no business to say that He don't give it to other things as well."

"You've been thinkin' too much, Molly!"

"Mebbe I have, an' mebbe I haven't. But whether it has a soul or not, John, you can't deny that the light has helped us, an' those we care for, more than once. Why shouldn't it do it again?"

He stirred uneasily in his chair, the absurdity of her rambling remarks jarring unpleasantly on his strained and tired nerves.

"The Lord moves in mysterious ways," he commented dryly. "That's true as gospel, Molly, but it's askin' a good deal to expect Him to bring a lighthouse into court an' make it prove an alibi!"

She was too deeply engrossed by memories of the past to heed his sarcasm or rebuke his irreverence.

"There was that time when the light saved my brother Jed. If that wasn't Providence workin' through the soul of the lamp—"

"I remember, Molly," he said impatiently.

She disregarded the interruption, and continued in a low voice, as if speaking more to herself than to him.

"It was another such night as this," she mused. "Come to think of it, 'twas November, too. There was a big sea runnin', an' a gale was blowin' up from the east. The emergency was bein' replaced that week, an' I recollect sayin' that if anythin' went wrong with the light we'd be in a pretty mess. Sure enough, about midnight, the lamp grew weaker an' weaker till it

was practically out. It was just burnin', but it gave no light at all. My heart stood still for a minute, an' then I called you as fast as ever I could, an' we tinkered an' toiled over that lamp for over an hour without even findin' out what was wrong. We near killed ourselves that night, between work an' worry an' thinkin' what might be happenin' to some poor ship that was dependin' on us for a course.

"It was past one when we about give up hope of doin' anythin', an' we stood there lookin' at the dark lamp an' tremblin' in every limb. I never felt like that before or since, an' never want to. An' while we stood there helpless, not knowin' what to try next, an' not even touchin' the lamp, the blessed light came up of its own free will! Can we explain that? The engineers can talk all they want about feed-pipes an' stoppages, but I've got my own opinions that aren't so scientific.

"Anyway, it hadn't any more than flashed up when we heard the flappin' of sails out there in the night, an' the shoutin' of men that thought their last hour had come. When we rushed to the glass there was nothin' to see, an' it wasn't till a week later that we heard that it was my own brother Jed, that had been tryin' to run into the harbor for shelter. As long as he hadn't raised the light he thought he was safe, an' all the time he was drivin' straight for these shoals as hard as ever he could go. When the light suddenly shone in front of him he thought the end had come for him an' his men; but he threw the tiller over as hard as he could, an' missed the rocks by five feet. He said he could have reached over an' patted Tom Thumb's Tooth as it slid by the Nancy's stern. What made that light come up? Was it just an accident, or did it know that some one we cared for was in mortal peril?"

The old man made no answer. He remained puffing at his pipe and staring into the fire, and presently she spoke again.

"Then there was the time Charley was born. I was in the hospital, over there on the mainland, an' they'd put me on the shore side of the buildin' because it was quieter an' sunnier. After the baby came, there was two whole days when they didn't think I could live, an' I don't suppose I would if it hadn't been that the doctor knew as much about human nature as he did about medicine.

"Put her in a room that looks out to

sea,' he says, 'an' fix her so she can look out the window.'

"They did as he ordered. That night, when I woke up, I felt the wind that I knew blowin' over me, cool an' salt; an' I looked out the window, an' there was the light winkin' at me, slow an' strong an' peaceful. It seemed to be tellin' me that you was settin' out here waitin' for news, an' it said how lonely you was, an' how you thought the day would never come. That was all I needed to give me a fresh grip on life. I lay there just drawin' in strength, an' pretty soon I was able to smile back at the light. Then it gave one more wink, the cheerfulest, gayest wink you ever saw, an' went out, an' I knew the dawn had come. After that the doctor said I was out of danger, an' I started to thank him for all he'd done; but I'd already told him about the light, an' he just smiled an' told me to give the credit where it was due. You see, John, he wasn't above thinkin' the light could do some good!"

There was a lump in the old man's throat as he threw an embracing arm about her shoulders.

"I know all that, Molly," he said huskily; "an' I've thanked the lamp more 'n once for what it did for me that night. Well, maybe you're right. I'm not sayin' that the Lord can't make this lighthouse an instrument of His mercy if He wants, though it don't seem possible to our poor human intellect." He rose stiffly. "I'm goin' to see if I can get some sleep," he added. "Will you be all right here, Molly?"

"As right as I've always been this thirty years," she answered stoutly. "Good night, John!"

He climbed the steep flight of steps that led to their bedroom, and in a few moments was between the sheets, seeking to forget his troubles in the calm oblivion of sleep. He met with no success, and he was still tossing restlessly from side to side an hour later, when he heard her soft tread ascending the stairs. Instead of pausing, she continued on her way upward, and he called out to her protestingly:

"It's all right up there, Molly. I had a look around just before I turned in."

"I'm goin' up anyhow," she replied. "Don't you bother about me."

She climbed on steadily through another compartment, which they used as a store-room, until she reached the small chamber where was the lamp itself. She did not

enter this, but contented herself with a seat on the floor at the top of the stairs, her feet resting on the steps. Here she remained motionless, her chin supported by her two hands and her eyes fixed hopefully on the great revolving light.

It would be at once idle and impertinent to pry into the half-mystical thoughts that flitted incoherently through her tired brain and occasionally sought utterance from her lips in the shape of whispered, broken prayers. Let it suffice that in her lonely vigil she found peace, and let us hope that the Highest Power heard her dry-lipped appeals for help, even though the weary old woman, in her hour of sorrow, directed them to the mythical Spirit of the Lamp.

## II

THE morning broke cold and gray, but the gale had subsided, and only a heavy sea was left to remind them of its force. At six o'clock arrived their relief, in the person of the spare man from another beacon a dozen miles up the coast. He had cheerfully risen two hours before the dawn and made the journey to Tom Thumb's Reef, to enable them both to go ashore—for no infraction is ever permitted of the rule which insists that a light shall never be entirely deserted for even a minute.

At seven o'clock there came a stanch, though battered, fishing-boat that boasted a powerful auxiliary engine. Her owner, a shy young fisherman, greeted the old couple with a smile as they came down the swinging ladder and landed upon his heaving deck with practised ease.

"It's right fine of you to come for us, Jim," the woman thanked him. "We'll be ashore in no time at all, with this boat."

"I'd do more 'n this for you, Mis' Bristed," he assured her. "An' I ain't forgotten that I went to school with Charley."

The words and the manner in which they were spoken brought a sudden light to their eyes and a new warmth to their hearts. Surely, all their small world, if it had not been "to school with Charley," at least knew him for what he was. A little comforted by this reflection, they turned their faces landward with more resolution and less fear to meet the fortune of the day.

The angry seas fought stubbornly to check their progress, and in spite of Molly Bristed's flattering opinion of the boat, it was nearly ten o'clock before they were ushered into Chester Leslie's private office.



AT SEVEN O'CLOCK THERE CAME A FISHING-BOAT THAT BOASTED A POWERFUL AUXILIARY ENGINE—



—HER OWNER GREETED THE OLD COUPLE WITH A SMILE AS THEY CAME DOWN THE LADDER

The lawyer managed to find reassuring words with which to greet them, but he was pale and preoccupied, and secretly grateful that they were so late in arriving. He was able to forestall a flood of awkward inquiries by hurrying them off to the courthouse; but the old woman detected the doubt and uncertainty that lurked behind his encouraging smile, and she succeeded in asking one pertinent question.

"You've found no one yet?"

"That saw him during those confounded ten minutes?" snapped Leslie. "No!"

Their eyes exchanged a momentary glance of despair; but they had reached the courthouse, and Leslie instantly became the most complacent, the most sanguine, and the most care-free person in the world. He smiled airily at the reporters' table, and the bow he made to the district attorney was a sublime and artistic blend of good-humored tolerance and condescension. The recipient, a gray little man, the veteran of a hundred legal battles, returned the salute with a grim smile and resumed the study of his notes.

The old couple found seats beside Leslie, and under a fold of Molly's black silk dress their hands met and clung in a strengthening clasp. In a state of gentle bewilderment they watched the scenes attendant upon the opening of court, their troubled minds being unable to comprehend much of what was passing. The judge excited their interest, and they decided that his face was kind and just beneath its mask of impassiveness.

Only for a minute, when the prisoner was brought in, did Molly Bristed awaken to action. She sprang from her chair with a low cry, and for a second mother and son were in each other's arms, while the reporters scribbled furiously. They were gently separated, and the prisoner, a clear-eyed, frank-looking man of thirty or a little less, took his seat on the other side of his counsel. The spectators in the rear of the court-room ceased whispering among themselves and settled into an attitude of hushed expectancy.

The district attorney rose to his feet. Dapper and debonair, the little gray man proceeded to outline the case for the State in precise and businesslike fashion. The case, he declared, was not an intricate one. He would show the gentlemen of the jury that there had been bad blood between the accused man and his victim, the unfor-

tunate Eric Saunders. He would call witnesses who had been present at a quarrel between the two men relative to the ownership of a fishing-smack—"a quarrel, gentlemen, that took place only a few hours before the murder."

He would show them, he continued, the movements of the prisoner on the evening when the crime was committed, from the moment when he flung out of a saloon door with an angry threat upon his lips until he returned, thirty minutes later, after accomplishing his terrible purpose. Further—here he contrived to countermince the expected line of the defense—he would contend, on behalf of the State, that the rifled pockets of the deceased, and the other evidences of burglary, represented nothing more than a crude attempt on the part of the murderer to throw the police upon a false scent.

He resumed his seat, well pleased with the evident effect of his speech on the jury, and Leslie quickly took his place.

In ringing, confident tones the prisoner's counsel hurled defiance at the prosecution. He dwelt at great length on the excellent character of his client, and he affected to dismiss the State's case as being a mere jumble of circumstantial evidence cunningly compiled against an innocent man. There was a slight rustle of applause as he finished, and the two old people were surprised that the judge did not immediately dismiss the charge; but the young lawyer himself returned to his place with a heavy heart and no illusions.

### III

THE morning passed rapidly. The district attorney, ruthless and efficient, accomplished all that he had promised and a little more. His witnesses testified reluctantly against a man whom they had known all their lives, but that very reluctance added appreciable weight to their evidence. Finally the worst was over, and just before court was dismissed for the noon recess the prosecutor was able to announce that the State rested.

Directly after lunch, Leslie called upon Charles Bristed to take the stand in his own defense, his voice pronouncing the prisoner's name with an assumption of assurance that he was far from feeling. He was taking a desperate step, hoping that the personality of the accused man would make its own impression on the jury; and



"A QUARREL, GENTLEMEN, THAT TOOK PLACE ONLY A FEW HOURS BEFORE THE MURDER"

in the main he was justified by the outcome. Through a veritable hurricane of objections from the district attorney, Bristed answered his counsel's questions with a frank, straightforward mien until the complete history of a clean and honest life was revealed to the jury.

The little gray man rose to cross-examine. His voice was suave, almost kindly, but

each question seemed to draw the deadly noose a shade tighter about the prisoner's neck.

"Now, Bristed, did you have a quarrel with Saunders on the afternoon of the day he was killed?"

"Yes, sir."

"You left him in anger, and witnesses have testified that you discussed the matter

with them that evening in the bar of the Fishermen's Club. Is that true?"

"Yes, sir."

"It is stated that you were excited, and used violent language. Is that so?"

"Yes, sir."

"Had you been drinking?"

"I was never drunk in my life, sir!"

"Had you been drinking?"

"I'd had two glasses of beer."

"Did you finally rush from the bar, announcing your intention of going to see Saunders?"

"Yes, sir."

"You returned in half an hour?"

"So witnesses have sworn, and I believe them."

"Saunders, as we all know, was found less than an hour later with his skull crushed in by some heavy weapon. Now tell us, Bristed—when you left the group of men at the bar, did you use the following words: 'I'll break his ugly head before I sleep'?"

Leslie sprang to his feet with a furious objection. The judge listened to him with a grave and troubled face, but before he could sustain or deny the motion the prisoner had settled the matter in his own fashion.

"I did say that, sir, but I meant no murder!"

There was a collective gasp from the attentive audience. Leslie shrugged his shoulders in anger and annoyance. The district attorney shot a glance of triumph at the jury.

"That's all!" he said.

"One moment!" cried Leslie. "Tell us in your own words, Bristed, what you did after you left the Fishermen's Club."

"Well, sir, I was pretty mad, and I started off at a good clip for Saunders's house, intending to give him a sound thrashing for the dirty turn he had done me; but the night air began to cool me off a bit, and I started thinking. I remembered that he was an older man than me, by a score of years. I've learned by experience the foolishness of giving way to my temper. So about half-way to his house I turned off the road and followed a footpath that leads to a small stretch of beach in front of the old Meakin cottage. I knew I could see the light on Tom Thumb's Reef from there. I walked up and down on the sand for about ten minutes. By that time I'd got the best of my temper, and I came straight

back to town. That's all I did—so help me God!"

"Why did you want to see the light on Tom Thumb's Reef?"

"My mother had charge of it that evening. I knew if I could see it, sir, and think of her, out there, saying a prayer for me as she usually does at night, it would keep me from doing anything wrong."

Silence fell upon the crowded court-room. The answer had been given simply, with no apparent attempt at pathos, and Leslie wisely decided to pause on that note. Allowing a moment for the words to sink into the minds of the jurors, he dismissed the witness with a nod and a smile, satisfied that he had done what he could.

He was about to call the next name on his list when a court attendant tapped him on the shoulder and handed him a slip of paper. Leslie glanced at the penciled message upon it, read it again more carefully, and suddenly became the personification of astonishment and excitement.

He wheeled about until his eye could sweep the sea of faces in the rear. A young man in a dark gray suit half rose from his seat and motioned to him. Leslie turned to the judge.

"Your honor, a new witness has just come forward whose testimony promises to be of the utmost value. Have I your permission to consult with him for a minute?"

"Certainly, Mr. Leslie."

There was a buzz of interest, and every eye followed them as the lawyer and the young man in gray forced themselves to a corner of the room and fell to whispering earnestly. When Leslie returned to his place it was noted that he bore himself with the air of a man who feels victory in his grasp.

"With your honor's permission," he said, "I will call a witness whose name is not on my list."

The judge inclined his head, his countenance betraying no sign of the curiosity he must have felt.

"Richard Masters!"

#### IV

THE young man in gray took the stand, was sworn, and in concise fashion proceeded to answer a series of questions from Leslie. He stated that on the night of the murder he was a visitor at the Meakin cottage, then occupied by the family of his *fiancée*, who was now his wife. On the evening in



"I DID SAY THAT, SIR, BUT I MEANT NO MURDER!"

question he had been on the veranda of the cottage, and had seen a man walking up and down the beach for ten minutes. It was bright moonlight, he had seen the man clearly, and he was prepared to identify him positively as the prisoner on trial. He had caught a good look at the man as he came along the footpath close to the house. Since that time witness had been away a great deal, and had never connected his experience with the murder until he had chanced to attend the trial, and had promptly recognized the accused.

"Thank you," said Leslie. He smiled at his opponent. "Your witness, Mr. District Attorney!"

The little gray man was still dapper, still debonair—and still fighting. He asked a few aimless questions designed to lull the witness into security, then launched his final attack.

"Do you carry a watch, Mr. Masters?"

"No, sir."

"Ah! Did you have a watch upon your person on the night of the murder?"

"No, sir."

"Quite so! Yet you have just sworn that you had the prisoner under observation for a definite period of ten minutes?"

"Yes, sir."

"It is very well known that it is difficult, if not impossible, to gage the passage of time accurately by mere guesswork. Will you please tell us—and weigh your answer carefully, Mr. Masters—how you are so positive that this interval was exactly ten minutes?"

The audience waited breathlessly, fearful that the witness might be discredited at the very moment when he had so dramatically come to the aid of the defense. Leslie bit his lip anxiously. To the dismay of the prisoner's friends, the young man on the stand hesitated perceptibly and reddened with embarrassment.

"Well," he finally commenced, "it was this way. I had called to take my *fiancée* to the theater, and found that she was not quite ready. The bungalow is somewhat restricted as to space, and after bidding me good evening she requested me to wait on the porch for ten minutes before coming in, as she—er—had some alterations to make in her costume. I turned back to the veranda, and it was then that I saw this man come down the path past the house. Perhaps you know how it is when you're engaged, sir—"

He halted, blushing. There was a smile on every face in the room, and even the grave judge softened at the humanizing touch. He leaned forward with a little twinkle in his eyes.

"Go on, Mr. Masters," he encouraged. "I am sure that almost all of us here have been in love, and can sympathize with you!"

"It sounds silly, sir, but I felt morally obliged to be just ten minutes, no more and no less. I had no watch on me, but I noticed the light on Tom Thumb's Reef, and remembered that it flashes every ten seconds. So while I waited, with the man on the beach in full view, I counted sixty flashes."

There was a moment of astonished silence, broken by a burst of applause that the attendants quelled with difficulty. Chester Leslie wiped his brow and grinned seraphically, while his client, bewildered by his sudden good fortune, sat almost in a stupor.

The tumult ceased abruptly as it became apparent that the district attorney was addressing the court. He bore himself jauntily even in defeat.

"If your honor will permit," he said, "I would like to be the first to congratulate the defense on an alibi that is as novel as it is conclusive. No doubt the real murderer will eventually be brought to justice; and meanwhile, on behalf of the State, I move that the charge against Charles Bristed be dismissed."

"Motion granted," announced the judge, and his face was that of a man who has been happily spared from a great ordeal.

There was renewed cheering and hand-clapping as the spectators hurriedly rose from their seats and crowded to the door. The reporters joined the rush, scrambling madly for first place at the nearest telephone, while Leslie stood over his client and idiotically pounded Charles Bristed on the back.

In the whole room the only quiet figures were those of the old couple, who still sat hand in hand, their dazed faculties striving to realize the sudden turn of affairs that had freed their son from the very shadow of the gallows. It was Molly Bristed who first found her voice.

"John!" she whispered tremulously, her fingers tightening about his. "What did I tell you? The light!"

"God bless it!" he cried.

# Old English Roads and New Associations

THE HISTORIC INTEREST AND MEANING OF THE UNACCUSTOMED SIGHTS THAT AMERICANS SEE IN PASSING THROUGH RURAL ENGLAND

By Ernest C. Pulbrook

"IT beats me why you made your streets so narrow. Any one would think you never used anything bigger than a hand-barrow!"

The speaker was an American who had enlisted in a Canadian battalion before his own country entered the war. After serving at the front in France he had been invalided and sent to a lumber-camp a short way out of a little English town. The inevitable had happened, for a motor-lorry laden with logs had run into a cart when turning a

sharp corner in the narrow street, and its crew were discussing the damage and the cause of the accident.

The street certainly *was* narrow. A tall man, standing with one foot in either gutter, could almost straddle it. The young American had unconsciously hit upon the reason of its narrowness—it was originally intended for traffic represented only by a hand-barrow or packhorse; for when it was first trodden out—definitely planned it never was—vehicles were almost unknown.



A FARMHOUSE BESIDE A WINDING LANE, DEEP IN A CORNISH VALLEY

Such is the explanation for many things in England that seem strange, or even foolish, to men from America and the British Dominions. England has grown rather than been made, and everywhere you see

original purpose, sometimes adapted for a new one which it ill fits.

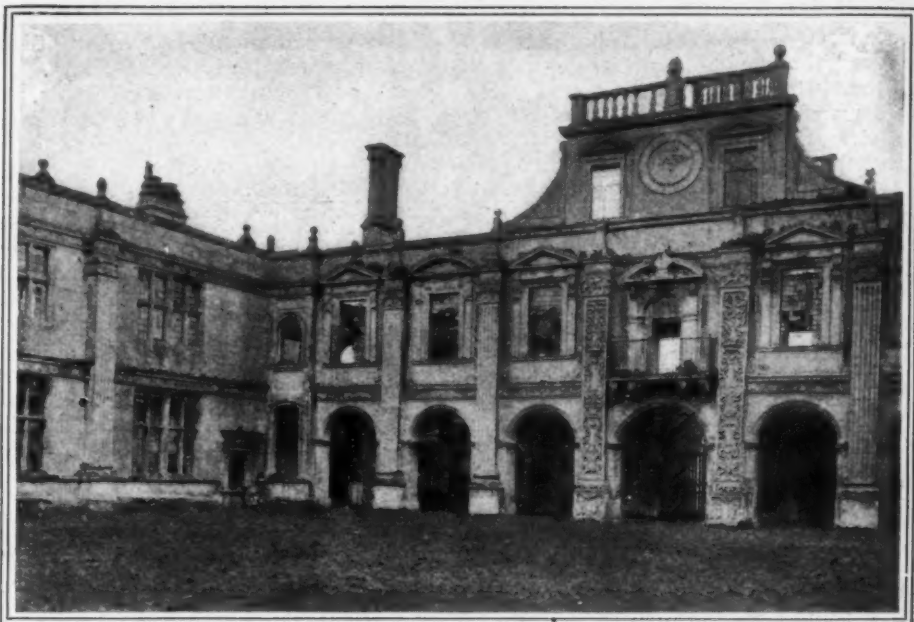
Thus these narrow streets of the sleepy towns and of many cities, where the newer thoroughfares on the outskirts are broad



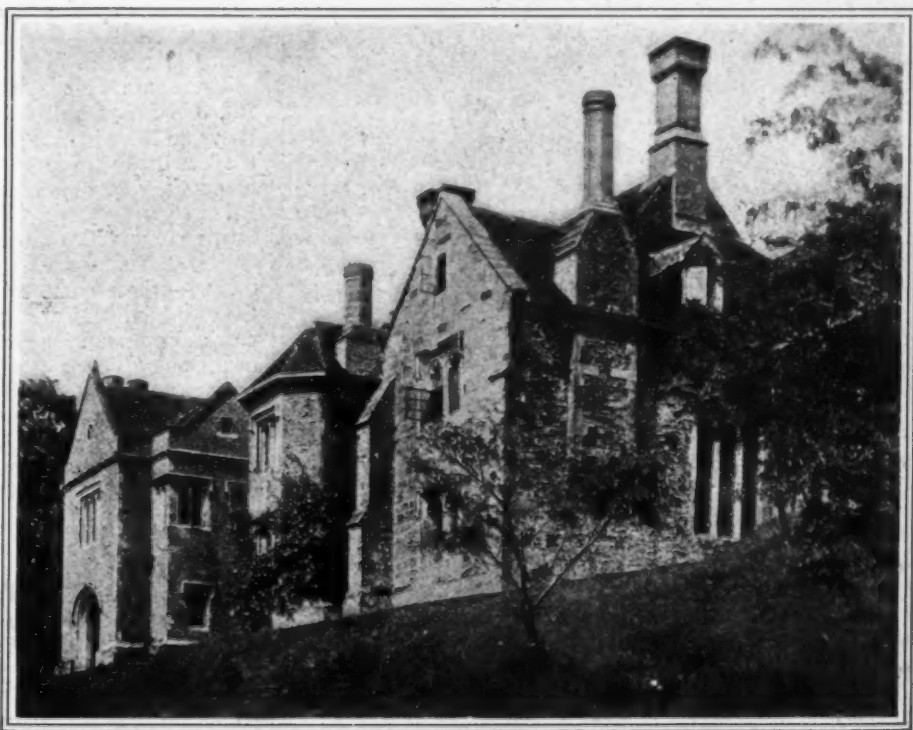
ST. JOSEPH'S DOOR, A TWELFTH-CENTURY GATEWAY IN THE RUINS OF GLASTONBURY ABBEY, WHERE TRADITION SAYS THAT JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA FIRST INTRODUCED CHRISTIANITY INTO ENGLAND

the new grafted on the old. This may be remarked even in the big cities, although in some of them whole districts have been pulled down and rebuilt at great expense to meet modern requirements. In the country it meets one everywhere. The old lingers beside the new, sometimes still used for its

and straight, while in the center they are narrow and tortuous, remain as they have been for centuries. When village or town first began to grow round a lord's estate or a monastery, or beside a ford, or at a strategic point in a pass among the hills, roads there were none, only tracks, except



THE RUINS OF AN OLD ELIZABETHAN MANSION—INNER COURT OF KIRBY HALL, IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



BREDE PLACE, A SUSSEX MANSION LOCALLY KNOWN AS THE GIANT'S HOUSE, TRADITION STATING THAT ONE OF ITS ANCIENT OWNERS WAS A CHILD-EATING OGRE

for the few broad highways the Romans drove through the land.

Along the modernized portions of some of these Roman roads American legions were marching, last year, as they trained for victory. In the sparsely settled parts of northern England stretches of them re-

some of the oldest ways in Britain converge, to the broad turnpike of modern times, which owes its birth to coaching days.

If you follow these roads and lanes, you will become acquainted with all the features of the countryside, all the activities of its people. Though the hedges may be high,

there comes a gate which is either a portal to the past or merely a window opening on a beautiful prospect. Forge and workshop stand beside the crossroads, and village and town pour their tributaries into the main route.

The hedge that sometimes shuts out the landscape may hide a secret of the way itself. Mayhap a stretch has not been repaired for a century or two, and the still existing pavement of stones and the stump of a cross, half hidden by the wild growth at the hedge-foot, proclaim that once it was a path that led from monastery to church.

There are Salt Ways and Tin Ways and Hog Ways and Drove Ways—the last broad tracks that follow the ridges of downlands, or grassy lanes near towns along which cattle and sheep were formerly driven—whose name tells their origin. Near the coast, deep sunk beneath overhanging banks and overgrown by trees, are the smugglers' ways. Many a yarn will you



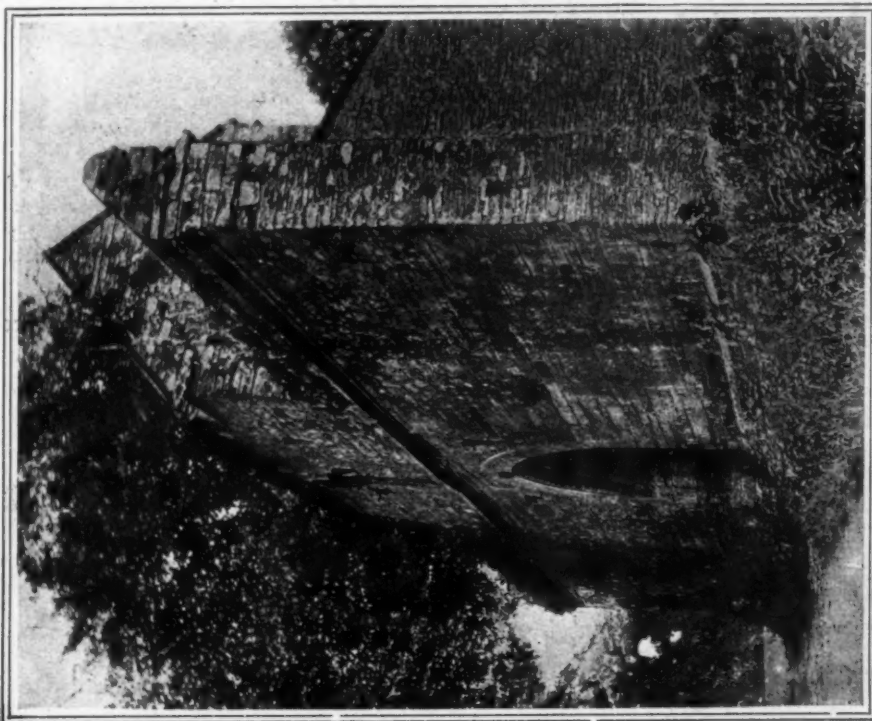
AN OLD PREACHING-CROSS IN THE VILLAGE CHURCHYARD AT BISHOP'S LYDEARD, IN SOMERSETSHIRE

main almost as the ancient conquerors left them. Roads and soldiers go together, and every host of civilization leaves behind it a memorial of better communications. Railroads are but the modern highway, and the auto has made the old-fashioned type more important than ever. If you understand the roads and all they represent, you understand the country they intersect.

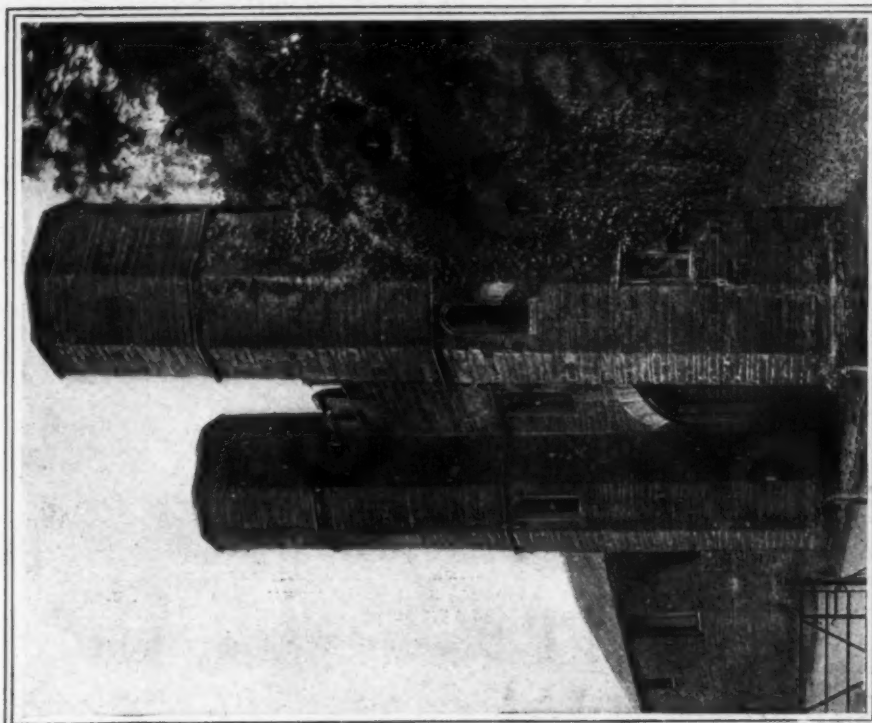
In England every kind of road exists, from the hardly discernible trackway along the ridges leading to meeting-places of prehistoric man, such as Stonehenge, on which

hear of such paths, tales of contraband hidden in the adjoining church, of innocent-looking orchards containing secret hiding-places, of a wonderful moving duck-pond which covered a cellar.

Sometimes the road is worn down to the solid rock almost in the shape of a V, the narrow packhorse lanes along which the commerce of a district was carried by trains of laden horses, the leader wearing bells to announce its coming and to keep the following animals in the right path. Even though the track has been widened out of all recog-



HISTORY BY THE ROADSIDE IN RURAL ENGLAND—A GOTHIC ARCHWAY,  
NOW A FARM ENTRANCE, WHICH FOUR HUNDRED YEARS AGO  
WAS THE GATEWAY OF A MONASTERY



THE ANCIENT GATEWAY OF A CASTLE OR MANSION—SUCH A FRAGMENT  
NOT INFREQUENTLY SURVIVES WHEN THE REST OF THE  
BUILDING HAS DISAPPEARED



THE OLD MANOR-HOUSE AND VILLAGE CHURCH OF PILTON, IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE—THE MANOR-HOUSE IS NOW THE RECTORY

nition, its old line is sometimes indicated by a double hedge on one side, or by the packhorse bridges, steep and narrow, that still span a stream here and there.

Equally disused are the few pilgrim roads, the most famous being that from Winchester to Canterbury, with at least one end of which some of the gallant lads who braved the dangers of miles of ocean to fight for civilization have doubtless become acquainted. Another is the Palmers' Way to Walsingham, in Norfolk, which once saw the much-wedded Henry VIII march barefoot, for short of the shrine is the Slipper Chapel, where pilgrims left their shoes. Such pilgrim routes are usually marked by chapels and crosses and holy wells.

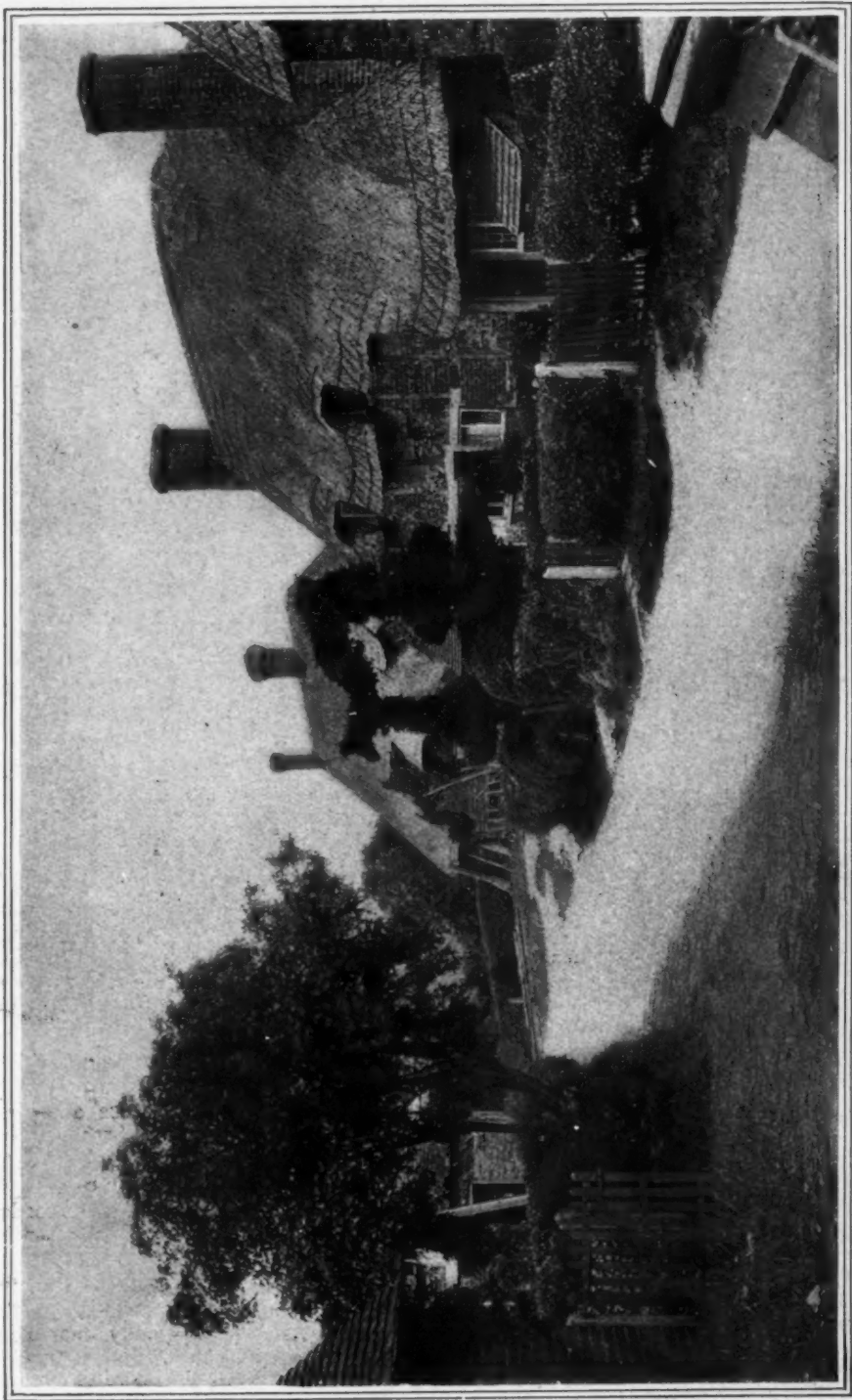
Many a cross is to be found along these old roads, though parts of the country are richer in them than others, Cornwall, Somerset, Derbyshire, and old Northumbria perhaps showing the most. Not all crosses are connected with the church. There are boundary-crosses and memorial crosses and weeping-crosses, the last denoting the night's resting-place of a beloved body being carried to its grave. The most famous weeping-crosses are those of Geddington and Waltham, erected by Edward I when following his dead queen to Westminster. Some are connected with the plague of 1665 and the following years, for during that

terrible visitation country-folk sometimes brought their produce to a cross outside the town, and then retired while the citizens replaced it with money.

Here the road passes the gateway of a farm, the ordinary snug home of a well-to-do cultivator or the humble abode, little more than a cottage, of a peasant proprietor. But there are others, and their number is large, which arrest attention by their air of distinction. Above the projecting porch is a coat of arms, stone mullions separate the high but narrow casements, and perhaps a barn shows the outlines of a chapel sadly knocked about. Sometimes the house is so large that only a portion is occupied, as windows broken or stopped with boards testify.

These are the old manor-houses of once famous families, families who fell from their high estate, or who built a more lordly dwelling and left the ancestral abode. In course of time they became ordinary farms, though in most cases it must be remembered that the old gentry were really farmers who cultivated their estates.

Some of these farms belonged to families whose names became famous in the annals of America. Sulgrave Manor, the home of the Washingtons in Northamptonshire, is probably the best-known of these. The Washington who built it appears to have



A COUNTRY ROAD AND PICTURESQUE THATCHED COTTAGES AT OLD BASING, IN HAMPSHIRE, THE SCENE OF A BATTLE BETWEEN THE SAXONS AND DANES IN THE FIRST YEAR OF KING ALFRED'S REIGN (A.D. 871)

aimed too high, for he does not seem to have finished the house he designed—a failure common enough three hundred years ago, when the great building craze took place, and noblemen exhausted their funds in beginning mansions which they were unable to complete.

all that remains of the original building erected four hundred years ago. Some of these covered entrances figure in history or legend. On one the infamous Judge Jeffreys hanged some hapless follower of Monmouth; from another, at midnight, issues the ghostly coach of a former inmate



TWO ERAS OF ROAD-MAKING SIDE BY SIDE—AN ANCIENT FORD IN THE VILLAGE OF GEDDINGTON, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, AND BESIDE IT A BRIDGE OVER THE BROOK

Sulgrave, however, has been invested with a dignity befitting its associations, and other one-time farms are once again the homes of substantial folk. Elsewhere there may be a farmhouse consisting of the remains of a priory or abbey, but these are comparatively few, though granges that once belonged to an abbot, or even a monarch, are not altogether rare.

Now the road passes the entrance-gates of a fine estate, whose manor-house—a castellated mansion of the early days of domestic architecture, or a porticoed and pillared palace of the seventeenth or eighteenth century—peeps out from the trees of the park, across whose billowing turf pass herds of deer. Perhaps the gate-house is

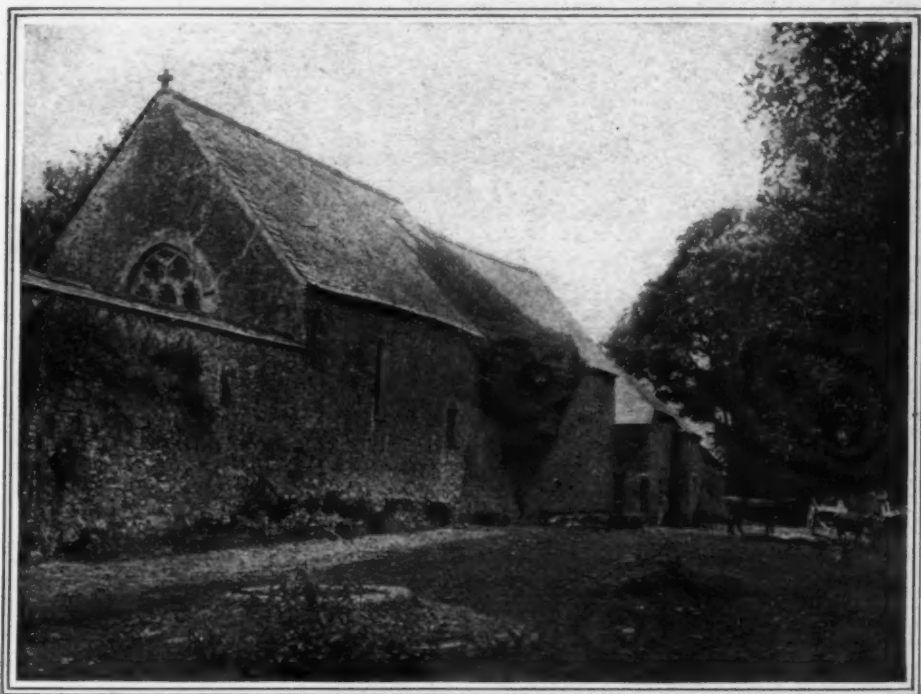
doomed to eternal nightly wanderings as punishment for some misdeed.

A Sussex mansion of Tudor days—pictured on page 143—is still known locally as the Giant's House, because according to popular story, one of the early owners was an ogre who fed on children. The monster's death could only be brought about by sundering his body with a wooden saw, which was duly carried out when he was helpless after a drinking-bout.

Another possesses a gruesome relic in the shape of a skull kept in a cupboard of the hall, concerning which many marvelous things are spoken—tales of horror, trying to weak nerves. If any one tries to bury it, fearful noises are heard, and misadven-



A ROADSIDE COTTAGE NEAR WINCHFIELD, IN HAMPSHIRE—"THE LITTLE HOME OF HUMBLE FOLK," COZY AND PICTURESQUE, WITH ITS NEAT FLOWER-GARDEN IN FRONT OF IT



AN OLD CHAPEL IN A FARMYARD AT FARDEL BARTON, IN DEVONSHIRE—IT WAS BUILT IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY BY A MEMBER OF THE RALEIGH FAMILY



A TYPICAL ENGLISH COUNTRY LANE, WINDING BETWEEN HIGH BANKS AND FLOWERY HEDGES—IT MAY ORIGINALLY HAVE BEEN A PACKHORSE TRAIL



AN OLD BRIDGE AT ALLERFORD, IN SOMERSETSHIRE—ITS STEEP, NARROW ROADWAY SHOWS THAT IT DATES FROM THE DAYS WHEN PACKHORSES WERE THE FREIGHT-CARRIERS OF THE ENGLISH COUNTRY



A COTTAGE THAT IS THE REMNANT OF AN OLD MANSION—THE MULLIONED WINDOWS AND MOST OF THE FRONT WALL EVIDENTLY ONCE BELONGED TO A MUCH MORE PRETENTIOUS BUILDING

ture attends on those who would thus get rid of it.

Few of these old houses are without interest, and the legends clinging round them are endless and various. They were the homes of great men and women of the past, they have been famed in history and romance, or they lie ruined and deserted because the horror of some old-time tragedy haunts them still.

Here and there are remnants of mansions which have been demolished, stone by stone, to build other houses, until now only the smallest fragment is left—sometimes converted into a cottage, whose inmates are likely to be more impressed with its inconveniences than with its proud traditions and its remaining embellishments. Cheek by jowl with such a cottage may stand another which looks what it is—the little home of humble folk.

These last are usually the most picturesque of all. A few are mere tumble-down ruins, long since condemned as uninhabit-

able, but a delight to the eye in their decay; some are still used because there are no other cottages to take their place; but most, unless wilfully neglected, are yet as cozy and weather-proof and habitable as on the day they were finished, three hundred years or so ago.

Creepers cling to the walls of mellowed brick and timber, or stone, or plaster, and hang from the thatch, which is often green with age. Lichen covers the slates of their bellying roofs. Roses and other flowering plants climb the porches; and a tiny strip of ground at the foot of the walls is turned into a miniature garden, where old-fashioned blooms make a splash of rich and varied color.

What makes the old English cottage and untouched village so beautiful? The fact that they were built by the villagers themselves, according to local fashion and out of materials obtained on the spot, so that they melt into their surroundings, of which they truly form a part.

# THE STAGE

A THEORY REGARDING SURE-FIRE HITS,  
AND THE SEA-CHANGE THAT  
MAY ACCOUNT FOR SUN-  
DRY FAILURES

By Matthew White, Jr.

THE sure-fire hit—that, of course, is what all managers are looking for, but seldom find. It isn't all the managers' fault, either. Authors persist in writing failures because they want to treat some theme of special interest to themselves. Nine playwrights out of ten would prefer to write about temperament rather than temper, yet a pot of money in royalties, I feel sure, awaits the man or woman who will successfully dramatize anger. This is a human foible, and all of us, whether we like to admit it or not, are interested in our neighbors' failings. It is not necessary that they be major sins. Indeed, these have already been ground to death on the theatrical phonograph.

Winchell Smith and John L. Golden are two wise men who seem to know what the public really wants, and in "Three Wise Fools" they have added a third to their pair of hits. For their first, "Turn to the Right," the general eagerness to see the mean man worsted, even if by rather questionable means, furnished the key-note of triumph. With their second, "Lightnin'," it was the shiftlessness of the old-man hero, weak but lovable, that appealed, while in "Three Wise Fools," the folly of living in a rut supplies the basic idea.

After the girl they all love turns them down, three bachelors of means set up housekeeping together in a Washington Square dwelling. There's a touch of "Daddies" in their adoption of the child that is left behind, years later, at her death, by their old sweetheart, and which turns out to be a grown girl instead of a baby boy; but it's only a touch, and the play finds other sources for the constantly entertaining quality it possesses. Austin Strong, born in San Francisco, but long resident in England,



FLORENCE REED, STARRING IN "ROADS OF DESTINY," A THEME WITH VARIATIONS  
*From her latest photograph by White, New York*



MAUDE HANAFORD, WHO IS LIZA WITH JOHN BARRYMORE IN "REDEMPTION," THE NOTABLE  
 DRAMA FROM THE RUSSIAN OF TOLSTOY

*From a photograph by Campbell, New York*

is the author. Eleven years ago his "Toy-maker of Nuremberg" ran but three weeks at this same Criterion Theater, where "Three Wise Fools" promises to stay the season out. More successful were his one-act offerings, "The Drums of Oude" and "The Little Father of the Wilderness."

A capital cast sheds additional luster on a corking play. Marvelously realistic are

both Claude Gillingwater and Harry Denport as the crusty man of money and the philosophizing physician, respectively; and yet I distinctly recall both these actors as disporting themselves season after season in musical comedy. Nor does William Ingersoll, as the judge, leave anything to be desired. The same goes for Charles Laite, who, along with Helen Menken, brings the



HELEN MENKEN, WHO IS LEADING WOMAN IN THE ENTERTAINING PLAY OF THRILLS  
AND LAUGHTER, "THREE WISE FOOLS"

*From a photograph by Abbe, New York*

breezy atmosphere of youth into a piece chiefly concerned with middle age.

There are only two women on the roster,

in London is a stage tradition that will long endure.

I wonder what there is about law that



BILLIE BURKE, WHO IS STILL IN PARAMOUNT PICTURES AND MAY NOT RETURN TO THE SPEAKING STAGE UNTIL NEXT SEASON

the other being Phyllis Rankin, as the housekeeper. Miss Rankin, daughter of the famous McKee of the name, is the wife of Harry Davenport, whom she met when they were both playing in the celebrated "Belle of New York," whose wonderful hit

drives so many members of the bar to the stage. Possibly it is their ability to sway a jury. At any rate, whatever the cause, numberless players have been recruited from the ranks of the lawyers, Gillingwater, who hails from St. Louis, among them.

In his case, however, he had been barely apprenticed to an uncle before he joined a traveling repertory company. Four years of this life garnered for him experience, if

ward grade one might have supposed, for Belasco saw him act there, and in due course gave him the rôle of the American consul in "Mme. Butterfly," which was



ADA MEADE, WHO IS GEORGETTE BREVAL IN THE BIG MUSICAL-COMEDY HIT AT THE NEW AMSTERDAM THEATER, "THE GIRL BEHIND THE GUN"

little else; so he made the big jump from Chicago to New York, where he found an opportunity to do a song and dance in "Little Christopher," a musical piece that followed the long run of "1492" at the Garden Theater. From here he drifted to the Bowery, which did not spell the down-

played as a two-scene piece after "Naughty Anthony," with Blanche Bates in the lead. This, of course, was before Puccini set it to music.

Later on, for several seasons, Gillingwater was *Denys*, *Du Barry's* faithful servant, with Mrs. Carter in the famous drama



PEGGY O'NEIL, WHO WAS THE GENERAL'S CHAUFFEUR IN "BY PIGEON POST," ONE OF THE MANY LONDON HITS DESTINED TO PROVE NEW YORK FAILURES

*From a photograph by Charlotte Fairchild, New York*

of the French Revolution, which assuredly gave its audiences their money's worth in quantity—a thing they seldom get at the play these days. A part especially written for him by Henry Blossom kept him in musical comedy with Fritz Scheff as long as she played "Mlle. Modiste," and later on he was with Montgomery and Stone in "The Old Town." If you haven't seen him lately, it is because you haven't taken in vaudeville.

It was vaudeville that brought Helen Menken back to the stage after finishing her career as a child actress. As a little tot she had played with Annie Russell in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," which opened the Astor Theater, and she was also in "Humpty Dumpty"—of course not the old George L. Fox hit of the later sixties, but a different edition done at the New Amsterdam. Last season she acted with John Drew in "Pendennis," and followed that with a part in a startling contrast to the Thackeray piece in the Woods farce, "Parlor, Bedroom, and Bath." In "Three Wise Fools" she is the girl who comes to live with the three bachelors as their ward, carrying a dreadful secret with her, and thus bringing to the comedy the melodramatic touch which prevents its cloying from too much sentiment.

There's melodrama enough in "The Crowded Hour" to outfit an entire Third Avenue of the old days, but happily none of it is crude, if properly played. I'm not sure, however, that Jane Cowl plays it in quite the right key. I can scarcely blame her for not finding it entirely congenial. After the charming rôle she had in the other war play, "Lilac Time," that of a Follies girl, frantic in her pursuit of a married man, could scarcely be much of a lure.

And yet "The Crowded Hour" is a really big war play. The central idea of it occurred to the authors, Edgar Selwyn and Channing Pollock, last summer, when Pollock was having an interview with Selwyn regarding another play of his—"Roads of Destiny," since produced, after many vicissitudes, by A. H. Woods. There was not time, however, to get it ready for the opening of the new Selwyn Theater, which Miss Cowl had been slated to inaugurate, and for which her own play, "Information, Please," had been scheduled as far back as late spring. Thus "The Crowded Hour" was brought out in Chicago, with Willette Kershaw in the lead, and scored heavily.

Meanwhile "Information, Please" failed, so it was quite natural for the Selwyns to revert to an assured success in their desire to find another piece for their new house. The war, too, was hastening to a close, and a war play might get out of date if not placed on Broadway as speedily as possible. Even as it is, the impassioned speech against slackers in the first act failed to arouse the thunders of applause it won in Chicago before the signing of the armistice.

I think, too, that the piece received the wrong kind of notices in New York. The critics dwelt on the hesitation of *Peggy Lawrence*, at the switchboard near the front, as to whether to save an army or her lover. In the play she debated not an instant over her prime duty to the army; and to my mind the episode is so old as to be negligible in considering the merits of the drama, which has many others far superior to it. Not the least of these are the scenes in French, so deftly wrought into the fabric of the piece that they supply accurate atmosphere without leaving the audience in the dark.

The Frenchman, Georges Fleteau, who appeared here briefly with Mrs. Fiske in "Service," last spring, has one of these parts, and the applause evoked by his recital of "The Star-Spangled Banner" stops the play. Christine Norman, who was the hostess of the house-party in "Upstairs and Down," is again a wife, the husband being Orme Caldara, who has been leading man for Miss Cowl since "Within the Law." A very good rendering of an exceedingly difficult part he gives, too. Excellent also is Henry Stephenson, as the British captain, while Franklyn Ardell proves a host in himself as comedy relief. In fact, ungallant as the statement may sound, to my thinking the men in "The Crowded Hour" outshine the women.

Mr. Stephenson was in "Information, Please," likewise in three other war plays—"Lilac Time," "Inside the Lines," and "Under Fire." He is an Englishman, thereby carrying out the scheme of the Selwyns in casting "The Crowded Hour" with players belonging to the three different nationalities represented. It would indeed have been a crime to give Ardell's part to any other than the dyed-in-the-wool American he is. The character reminds one of his rendering of the vaudeville actor in "The Family Cupboard," some five years ago.

Speaking of nationalities, England has



FAY Bainter, whose manager has at last found a new play for her in "EAST IS WEST," BY  
SAMUEL SHIPMAN AND JOHN B. HYMER

*From her latest photograph—Copyrighted by Strauss-Peyton Studios, Kansas City*



CAROLYN THOMSON, WHO HAS THE NAME PART IN THE PLAY WITH MUSIC, "LITTLE SIMPLICITY"

been extensively represented in the early winter offerings on Broadway, possibly by way of exchange for the multitude of Yankee goods now on London stages. "By Pigeon Post," presented on the same night as "The Crowded Hour," was called by one reviewer "too natural and sweet," while another found it to be a "firecracker war play that exploded with a fizz." Mr. Ziegfeld provided a sterling cast, but the pigeons themselves "appearing personally,"

to borrow screen language, seem to have achieved the biggest hit, although Peggy O'Neil affords much enjoyment as the general's chauffeur. Four years ago Miss O'Neil toured the country as one of the many *Pegs o' My Heart*, and then made a big jump from Irish characters to the mystical Indian girl in "The Flame."

Yet another war-time play from the West End was "Betty at Bay," said to have scored at the Strand. Just why I can't



IRENE BORDONI, FEATURED LEADING WOMAN IN THE FARCE FROM THE FRENCH, "SLEEPING PARTNERS,"  
ONE OF THE HITS OF THE NEW YORK SEASON

*From a photograph by Abbe, New York*

imagine—or, no, I shouldn't say that, for of recent months the failures of imported London successes have been so frequent that they should cease to cause surprise. Possibly our managers might take a leaf out of the English theater magnates' book, and import their fiascoes. It seems that a London director has been making frantic efforts to secure the British rights of one of our most distinguished early autumn misfires—"A Very Good Young Man."

"Did you ever see anything quite so elementary?" was the remark I overheard a young woman make to her escort after sitting through "Betty at Bay."

And yet the man who produced this very inadequate piece in New York is the same enterprising young manager who imported Galsworthy's "Justice."

"A Place in the Sun," a third in the group of recent British candidates for Broadway favor, was played over there before the war. It is of very uneven merit, its best points pivoting on the least important characters. Norman Trevor's presence in the cast evidently counted for a strong factor in the play's presentation here, yet both the character he depicted and his playing of it were surpassed by the rôle that fell to John Halliday, who took the late Julian L'Estrange's place in "An Ideal Husband." As a baronet's heir, whose sole accomplishment is his ability to wear good clothes, and who lives on his father's bounty, he realizes the truth and frankly avows it, thus supplying a really novel view-point.

The play was written by Cyril Harcourt, deservedly remembered for his "A Pair of Silk Stockings." The author has given himself a subordinate, but most effective bit, with a drunken scene that neither bores nor disgusts one—something rare, as I see it, on the stage these days. Frankly I was bored by the inebriate who picks invisible green lizards off the clothes of those with whom he is conversing at the health farm in "Oh, My Dear!" the sixth annual musical offering at the Princess Theater, and the third in the "Oh" series.

The usually skilful Bolton and Wodehouse must have dipped to the uttermost depths of their trunk to extract such a dull book. For a composer, the management dropped Jerome Kern in favor of Louis Hirsch, who has done almost as good a job as he did for "Going Up."

I should be tempted to suggest that next

year Messrs. Comstock and Elliott might acquire a new team of librettists, if never-failing audiences did not demonstrate that the box-office was unaffected by the quality of the goods delivered over the Princess footlights under this régime. The theater is small and hard to get into, and the prices are high; but it has come to be considered the smart thing to go to the musical shows at the Princess. If you go there, you are known at once to have bought your seats at a hotel agency—which fact carries a certain *cachet* with the society set, and consequently with those who want to belong to it.

However, if you enjoy tinkling tunes, those that the composer of "Tickle Toe" has provided for "Oh, My Dear," will fall pleasantly on your ear, while your eye will be gratified with fine dancing by Joseph Santley and others. Joe's wife, Ivy Sawyer, whom he met when they were both in "Betty," with Raymond Hitchcock, is with him now, playing the opposite part in "Oh, My Dear"; while other well-known names in the generally efficient cast are Roy Atwell, who made good with his "Some Little Bug Will Get You," three seasons ago, and Georgia Caine, the *Peggy from Paris* in the George Ade musical-comedy hit at Wal-lack's in 1903.

Speaking of team-work by composers and librettists, there never was and probably never will be such another happily matched pair as Gilbert and Sullivan, the revival of whose works has brought real success to the Society of American Singers at the Park. After giving "The Mikado," "The Pirates," and "Pinafore," they brought out "The Gondoliers," one of the most melodious and witty of the series, and one which, strange to say, has not been reproduced in New York, so far as I am aware, since the Castle Square Company gave it at the American during the week of June 20, 1898, with Raymond Hitchcock as *Don Alhambra del Bolero*. Practically every number is encored, with Craig Campbell's remarkably clear tenor perhaps evoking the most enthusiasm.

"The Gondoliers," almost the last of the far-famed list, followed "The Yeoman of the Guard," and was written in 1889 for the London Savoy, where it ran for nearly six hundred performances. A window, by the way, has recently been placed to the memory of Sir Arthur Sullivan in the Savoy Chapel, not far from the theater where



ELEANOR PAINTER, WHO IS STARRING IN THE MUSICAL COMEDY, "GLORIANNA," BASED ON "WIDOW BY PROXY," WHICH MAY IRWIN PLAYED ABOUT FIVE YEARS AGO

*From a photograph by Abbe, New York*



GLADYS GEORGE AS JALLINE, ONE OF TYLTYL'S SIX SWEET-HEARTS IN "THE BETROTHAL," MAETERLINCK'S SEQUEL TO "THE BLUE BIRD"

From a photograph by White, New York

his classic works held sway so long. I hope that before the season finishes Mr. Hinshaw's troupe will include "Patience" and "Iolanthe" among those underlined for reproduction.

#### AN ECHO OF "THE BLUE BIRD"

A welcome variant to a theatrical diet of sex, sentiment, and war is "The Betrothal," Maeterlinck's sequel to "The Blue Bird." To be sure, an episode of the earlier play dulls the keen edge of novelty in the idea of a visit to the land of unborn children, but the purpose with which the journey is undertaken in the new piece almost atones for that. The scene with the ancestors, too, is altogether out of the ordinary.

*Tyltyl*, now grown to seventeen, at the behest of *Fairy Berylune* sets out to seek his mate. Six girls who love him, and whom he thinks he loves, accompany him on the journey; also *Light* and a veiled figure, to say nothing of the giant *Destiny*, who gradually shrinks to baby size during the trip. The one girl, however, whom the boy must love more than any other, is still to be selected, until finally, in the land of unborn children, *Tyltyl's* smallest child picks out its mother, who turns out to be the veiled figure aforesaid. In real life she is *Joy*, the child of a neighbor who has moved away for a time, and whom the boy has not seen since she was a tiny girl. Their reunion in the last scene is very adroitly contrived, and adds a human note that blends harmoniously with the fantasies that have gone before.

Turning back in my scrap-books, I find that Winthrop Ames—also sponsor for "The Betrothal"—produced "The Blue Bird" at the New Theater on October 1, 1910, following its presentation in London. Although it was destined to prove a great success, the press notices were not especially favorable. The *New York Times*, for instance, said that "there was oftentimes absent that one thing to create complete illusion—the illusion one gets when reading undisturbed." Alan Dale's head-lines announced that "The Blue Bird" did not fly easily, and that it had been better done in London, while the *Evening Sun* man

found that the presentation lacked not only in illusion but in imagination as well.

I quote these "Blue Bird" opinions to offset an impression which seems to prevail as I write that the press has been colder to "The Betrothal" than it was to the first part of what the great Belgian dramatist apparently means to make a trilogy, for he has *Light* say to *Tyltyl*, toward the close of the newer play:

You are going on one more journey, a happier, a more joyous journey than either of the others, and also the last.

It is quite possible that this beautifully conceived little drama of love, which is exquisitely set forth at the Shubert, will equal in popularity its far-famed predecessor. The child-hero of "The Blue Bird" was played by a girl, Gladys Hulette, now in vaudeville. In "The Betrothal" the part is taken by Reggie Sheffield, who made a capital page to *Falstaff* in both Hackett's and Tree's "Merry Wives of Windsor." As might be expected, Edith Wynne Matthison's wonderful speaking voice lifts *Light* into the front rank, while Cecil Yapp, who was a most feline *Cat* in "The Blue Bird," gets a round of well-deserved applause for his one powerful scene as the miser.

Mr. Yapp hails from St. Paul, and was destined for the railroad business. Having no love for railroading, he was allowed by an indulgent father to go to London, where he learned to act at the school founded by the late Sir Herbert Tree, in whose company, at His Majesty's, Yapp made his first appearance in 1905. As a member of the New Theater company here, he made good from the very outset. A year ago he was with Eleanor Painter as the *Duke of Keels* in her brief departure from song—"Art and Opportunity."

#### WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The worst thing about "Little Simplicity" is its title. I can't imagine either the tired business man, for whose edification musical shows are supposed to be written, or the stranger within our gates, who after all goes to make up the bulk of Broadway audiences—I can't imagine either of them picking this piece to see merely from reading its title in the advertisements. And the title is practically all that the average theatergoer knows about the entertainment for which he has bought a seat before he looks at his program. *Veronique*, the name

of the heroine, would have been a much better title for "Little Simplicity," which is one of the many librettos by Rida Johnson Young, to which Augustus Barratt, an orchestra leader, has set the music. "Adèle" is a shining instance of the heroine's name being associated with a notable success.

It was in the London production of "Adèle," by the bye, that Carolyn Thomson, leading woman in "Little Simplicity," made her first hit. She is not an English girl, however, but a native of Minneapolis, where her appearance at high-school festivities revealed her talents. The war put an end to the "Adèle" engagement, practically her first, and on her return to this country she was at once snapped up for "The Star Gazer." Her last appearance previous to "Simplicity," was as *Ottile* with the Western company playing "Maytime."

Walter Catlett, the comedian of "Little Simplicity," is another of that small army of sons and daughters of San Francisco who have come to the top of the profession—a feat which, in the mind of all Thespians, means securing a part as principal on Broadway. He had been acting for nearly a dozen years before Oliver Morosco brought him from Los Angeles to West Forty-Fifth Street. This was in "So Long Letty," since when he has made Manhattan laugh in the Ziegfeld Follies and "Follow the Girl."

A general idea of the nature of "Little Simplicity" may be obtained from the scene synopsis, which is nothing if not comprehensive, shifting from a French café in Tunis, in 1912, to the Latin Quarter of Paris three months later, and thence to the almost inevitable "somewhere in France" of 1917.

It does seem that a more dignified name than "Hooray for the Girls" might have been chosen for the first show to be written after the armistice with a real victory act in it. But what's in a name, after all? There was some justification for such a title when applied to a musical-comedy review written by women and produced by the débutantes of New York. Surely there could be no more worthy object than the restoration of devastated France, and I trust that the week's run of the piece at the Forty-Fourth Street Roof Theater gave as much joy to the financial committee of the organization as it did to the audiences gathered there.

# Women in Warfare

A RECORD THAT RUNS THROUGH HISTORY, FROM THE ANCIENT LEGENDS OF THE AMAZONS TO OUR OWN DAY, WITH THE STORY OF JOAN OF ARC AS ITS MOST WONDERFUL CHAPTER

By Richard Le Gallienne

OF all the dramatic incidents of the great war none was more picturesque and appealing than the brief appearance upon its lurid stage of the Russian women's Battalion of Death. For a moment, at least, we forgot how often in the past women had been soldiers before, and with what success. Mme. Bochkareva, after all, was no such new phenomenon, but had behind her an ancestry of such fighting women as Penthesilea, Zenobia, Semiramis, Deborah, Judith, Boadicea, Catherine of Russia, Joan of Arc, and Charlotte Corday—to name but a few warrior women at random.

It was easily to be foreseen that the more war became a matter of mechanism, carried on by weapons which need no more strength to handle than suffices to press a button, or to use a telephone, that man's superiority in merely physical power, which has so long held woman under control, would cease to have its old importance. A woman can pull a trigger with as little effort as a man, and there have been American girls from the Western prairies known as combatants no less dangerous than beautiful. The revolver practically equalizes the sexes, and it is only when the bayonet has to be employed that man still retains his old supremacy unimpaired.

But here again a feminine battalion of death would have an advantage, for the soldier who could bayonet a woman would forever, like Achilles, be haunted by the deed. In the Trojan War, when Penthesilea led her army of Amazons against Greece, Achilles and she met in single combat, and, after a hard-contested fight, she fell by his hand; but Greek sculptors have celebrated the sorrow of Achilles at having had to slay a woman, even in self-defense,

and have shown him lifting her tenderly in his arms before she dies.

With the desperate entry of women into war, there is added hope that war may end, and indeed must end; for there is only one race whose men have shown themselves capable of slaying women in cold blood.

## OLD LEGENDS OF THE AMAZONS

It will doubtless be said that the Amazons never existed, but belonged to mythology. Of this, however, scholars are by no means certain. As with all early history on the misty confines of man's beginnings, it is probable that much that was believed of them by the Greeks was fabulous; yet there is nothing inherently unlikely in the main features of their story. Indeed, the fact that the Greeks worshiped three warrior goddesses—Minerva, Diana, and Bellona—is in itself something like presumptive evidence of the likelihood of a race, or races, of fighting women. Unless the conception of such women had seemed reasonable to the Greeks, there would have been no basis for their invention of those divine symbolic figures. For all the ancient deities were but the enlarged reflections of man's experience with, and interpretation of, actualities. It was the worshiper that made the god.

At all events, it seems hard to believe that so much heroic legend should concern itself with battles against the Amazons if the Amazons were a pure invention of Greek fancy. So formidable were these fighting women regarded that four of the most redoubtable of the Greek heroes are represented as having been sent against them—Bellerophon, Hercules, Theseus, and Achilles. One of the famous labors of Hercules was to bring back to Greece the girdle

of the Amazon queen, Hippolyta. Theseus was said to have accompanied his friend Hercules on this occasion, and to have captured the Amazon princess, Antiope, for his wife—which led to an Amazonian invasion of Attica for her recovery.

To Achilles's fight with Penthesilea during the Trojan War, allusion has already been made. Several regions were given as habitats of the Amazons, but they are generally represented as living in the northeast of Asia Minor, near the shore of the Black Sea. According to Herodotus, whose reputation for veracity does not rank high among historians, but whose facts are not always fancies, their chief activities were hunting and war. They fought either on foot or horseback, and invariably gave no quarter. The easier to use the bow, they cut or burned off the right breast—from whence came their Greek name, which signifies "breastless."

The fact that both Cyrus and Alexander encountered women fighters who declared themselves Amazons, brings them out of the mists of mythology into the light of historical times; and there seems to be little doubt that the women of the Sarmatians, a nomadic race wandering the steppes between the Don and the Caspian Sea, were sufficiently Amazonian to justify the persistence of the legend. They rode, hunted, and fought alongside their men, and no girl was allowed to marry till she had "killed her man"—that is, had slain at least one enemy of the clan. These women were known by their neighbors, the Scythians, as "lords of man," and may be historically regarded as the direct ancestors of the Russian Battalion of Death.

#### THE TRAINING OF THE SPARTAN WOMEN

Again, when one recalls the stern training of women and men alike in Sparta, one realizes that the conception of a race of warlike women would have seemed perfectly reasonable to the Greeks—though, as a matter of fact, the Spartan women did not actually engage in battle. Their chief business, however, being to give birth to soldiers, it was argued that only women who themselves were characterized by hardy endurance and stern masculine qualities were likely to become mothers of strong men.

No sickly girl was allowed to live, and from their earliest days the healthy ones underwent a course of gymnastic exercises. Upon attaining

girlhood they were taught to wrestle, to throw the quoit and javelin, and to box. They were present at the athletic contests in the stadium, to which matrons were not admitted. There they practised these accomplishments, and ran races, sometimes among themselves and sometimes with young men; nor was it considered immodest for them to strip naked for the purpose. A great feature was also made of dancing, both as a means of exercise and for the service of the gods. Yet the women of Sparta had a high reputation for chastity.

In our own time, the wholesome lack of self-consciousness among American girls in their college athletics, and their wide-spread revival of Greek dances—a development far from regretted by most of us—has prompted the clever Austrian writer, Emil Reich, from whom I have just quoted, to see in American womanhood a renaissance of the old Amazonian ideal. To quote him again:

The last word in American womanhood is this, that they represent actually what the ancient Greek myths, if myths they be, represented symbolically—a realm of Amazons grafted upon a realm of man. The old Greek Amazon is indeed the evident archetype of the women of the United States; and a real sculptor could not typify the glory and splendor of American womanhood more effectively than by representing it in a statue of an Amazon.

#### WARRIOR QUEENS OF EAST AND WEST

Though Amazon queens such as Penthesilea and Antiope may belong to mythology, the figures of Semiramis, Zenobia, and Boadicea, while they possess the same dramatic appeal to the imagination as of human queens, touched with some of the splendor of goddesses, cannot be denied historic existence, though doubtless their exploits have gained by the magnifying-glass of time. Yet it was to Semiramis rather than to her husband, Ninus, that the creation of the Assyrian empire was due. It was a heroic military exploit of hers in subjugating Bactria that won her husband's love, and Nineveh and Babylon were her creations. India alone withstood her imperial designs. For forty-four years she was the masterful ruler of her vast empire, and Asia, according to Strabo, was covered with her strong fortifications and other great engineering works—aqueducts, bridges, and roads over the mountains. She was as surely a warrior as any king, and as capable of leading her armies into battle.

Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, who perhaps even more brilliantly held our youthful imaginations, was another beautiful and mas-

terful warrior woman, to whom, according to the Emperor Aurelian, her husband, Odenathus, owed all his military success. She is described enthusiastically, in a letter written by the emperor and quoted by his biographer, Trebellius Pollio, as being of "a brilliant dark beauty, black, flashing eyes, and pearly teeth, having unusual physical endurance and frank, commanding manners, which secured her authority in the camp and desert."

Aurelian himself, with all his military skill, was to realize what a resourceful and energetic antagonist this woman with the black, flashing eyes and pearly teeth was to prove, when at length her defiance of Rome brought him and his army before Palmyra. But fate was at last against her, and her beauty, in a captive's chains, was to deck Aurelian's triumph on his return to Rome. There, by his clemency, she ended her life, with her sons, as a peaceful matron.

As for Boadicea, what youthful heart has not glowed over the story of her last stand with her brave Britons against the Roman legions? Tacitus and other Roman historians have chronicled her personal valor and her heroic end.

#### WARRIOR WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

The warrior priestesses of Israel have no less stamped themselves on the imagination of man—Miriam, Deborah, Jael, and Judith. No male warriors have presented figures of a more inspired valor, though in the case of the latter two, their methods of overcoming the foe may seem a little feminine in their treachery. The strict laws of honorable fighting, though they have never in the history of war been so cynically violated as by the German hordes, have not, it is to be feared, been always strictly observed by classical male heroes. Yet, when as children we read in our Bibles the story of the weary Captain Sisera seeking safety and hospitality in the tent of Jael, I think we all felt it a little unfair of the formidable Hebrew woman as she came while he slept, and with that terribly dramatic nail fastened his temples to the ground—"for he was fast asleep and weary." How fiercely jubilant and grimly humorous even is the old narrative:

Blessed above women shall Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent. He asked water, and she

gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish.

The fate of Holofernes, captain of King Nebuchadnezzar, seems perhaps a little more like fair play, for Judith of Bethulia, a beautiful and pious young widow of the tribe of Simeon, took her life in her hands as well as her honor when, in rich attire, accompanied by her hand-maiden, she entered the tent of Holofernes, and so charmed him for four days that on the fifth, when the truce between Israel and his army was to come to an end, he was her willing slave. When he slept, and she smote off his head with his own sword, she both avenged her own honor and saved her people. Of Judith it is recorded that she lived to the age of a hundred and five years, honored in Israel.

Of such terrible patriots as these Mr. Kipling might well write that "the female of the species is more deadly than the male." Of course, Deborah is a much finer type. She is the general and the leader in battle, where Jael and Judith are inspired assassins. Women may well recall with pride the picture of her, as she sat judging Israel under a palm-tree in Mount Ephraim, when Barak, the timorous captain of Israel, came before her at her bidding. She rebukes him with—

Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded saying, "Go and draw toward Mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun"?

How the modern woman, if she reads her Bible, must laugh over Barak's answer and Deborah's reply!

And Barak said unto her, "If thou wilt go with me, then will I go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go."

With fine scorn, Deborah answered:

"I will surely go with thee, notwithstanding that the journey thou takest shall not be for thine honor; for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman."

A woman warrior of antiquity who must not be forgotten was Queen Hatshepsu, who apparently began her reign by the murder of her brother, Thothmes II, and who reigned over Egypt for twenty years with a rigor which has earned her comparison with Catherine II of Russia. She was one of the great builders of Thebes, and

herself headed a great expedition to the Red Sea.

Of course, it must not be forgotten that all such women are largely great by position. Being born into princely houses, it comes natural to them to command, and their hereditary sanctions insure the obedience of captains and armies, whom they often only nominally led, though they may have inspired them.

#### WOMEN AS THE SPOIL OF WAR

The lot of women in ancient warfare who were not thus fortunately born was very different. They were either the broken or brave-hearted mothers who gave up their sons as they are still doing, as food for sword and javelin in conflicts which, while they were brought up to consider them as largely the business of their men-folk, must even then have seemed insensate and cruel. They were that, or they were among the vast multitude of camp-followers, with which all great armies of the past, even up to comparatively recent years, were encumbered. Thus they shared with their fighting lovers the spoils and orgies of victory, or, in case of defeat, either faced death or themselves became the spoil of the enemy. Women were regarded as not the least valuable loot of war, as we are reminded, in the history of Rome, by the rape of the Sabines and by picturesque memories of many a victorious general's triumph. What we nowadays call the "white-slave traffic" was once part of the business of war, and with the harems of so many Oriental princes—and possibly some Occidental ones—to be supplied, the business of slave-merchant, as he came and appraised the women captives in pens or "concentration camps" after the battle, was no doubt a highly lucrative one.

In the Biblical account of the battle in which Sisera fell, his mother, watching in vain through her window for his returning chariot, says:

Have they not sped? Have they not divided the prey—to every man a damsel or two?

Women may not have been as delicate in their feelings in earlier days, accustomed as they were to the daily experience of so much brutality and coarseness in and surrounding their lives; but there is no doubt that war entailed upon them as mothers, at least, sufferings which their masculine tyrants were incapable of conceiving, and va-

rious violations of sensitiveness and tenderness, in which they have always been the superiors of men. For men there were always "the bright face of danger," the lust of the battle, the glory and the singing; but for women then, as now, there was little but the wailing and the tears, the loss of loved husbands or sons when the more violent fortunes of war did not subject their own bodies to desecration.

But, alas, "the battle is not won with grief, nor dwells the sigh in the soul of war," to use the phrase of a poet seldom quoted nowadays—the Gaelic poet Ossian, who was on all men's lips when Scott was writing. In this day of Celtic revivals, it is strange that Ossian has not come into his own again. This quotation from him is the more pertinent here as it is taken from one of the prettiest stories of a disguised girl soldier in literature. Duntharmo, lord of Teutha, having murdered his foe Rathmos, lord of Clutha, imprisoned his two sons in caves by the bank of the river that flowed beneath his castle.

The daughter of Duntharmo wept in silence, the fair-haired, blue-eyed Colmal. Her eye had rolled in secret on Calthon; his loveliness had swelled in her soul. She trembled for her warrior; but what could Colmal do? Her arm could not lift the spear; nor was the sword formed for her side. Her white breast never rose beneath a mail; neither was her eye the terror of heroes.

Her steps are unequal; her hair is loose; her eye looks wildly through her tears.

She came by night to the hall. She armed her lovely form in steel. She came to the cave of Calthon, and loosed the thong from his hands.

Then they flew away to the court of Fingal, to implore his aid.

The helmet covered her lovely face. Her bosom heaved beneath the steel. Fingal returned from the chase, and found the strangers. They were like two beams of light in the midst of the hall of shells.

And so the pretty story moves on to its foreordained conclusion. "I found Calthon," ends the poet, "bound to an oak; my sword cut the thongs from his hands. I gave him the white-bosomed Colmal. They dwelt in the halls of Teutha."

#### ROMANTIC TALES OF CHIVALRY

In the early Celtic legends and the mediæval romances of chivalry we not infrequently meet some beautiful, high-born maiden, or, sometimes, wife, thus donning armor; so that, disguised as esquire or page,

she may follow her lover or husband to the wars. Some of these daring women acquitted themselves right doughtily to the shamefacedness of masculine knights; and the sex of others was only discovered as their corselets were unlaced for them to draw their last breath and take their last look into the eyes of the man they had died to save.

The motive would scarcely be such a favorite one with romance, had there not been many examples in real life to point its truth and give it the greater appeal. Nor need one be surprised—in fact, one would be surprised had it been otherwise—when one remembers that the young ladies of the castle were brought up to the same outdoor sports as their brothers, to hawking and archery, to riding at a ring, and the management of the lance. They were trained to be expert riders from infancy. And when one remembers the athletic girls of our own time, it seems not at all unlikely that they might often outmatch men who were not *Lancelots* or *Tristrams*.

Emil Reich has gathered together some interesting historical particulars on this head, which have a romantic as well as practical value in showing us that the "modern" woman is not in herself in advance of the ladies of old time, but that her type is only more widely distributed than it was in earlier periods. For instance:

In the absence of their husbands, the wives of forty knights in a castle by the Rhine, one Sunday, held a tournament, taking their husbands' names—at least, all except one maiden, who called herself Duke Walrabb von Lunberg. She toured with such success that she sent most of the other women out of the saddle. The duke determined to see the girl who had done such exploits in his name, and having presented her with a dowry and two horses, she was soon married to a man of honor.

With this charming story Mr. Reich groups some other particulars gathered more or less at random:

In the reign of Peter of Aragon a Spanish lady donned armor, and took a French knight prisoner, after she had killed his horse. In the Musée de l'Artillerie in Paris can be seen the armor worn by Elizabeth of Nassau, mother of Marshal Turenne, and by Charlotte de la Mark, who died in 1594; while in 1628 a gardener, digging under the site of the present Bourse of Paris, found nine cuirasses shaped for women.

In the time of Edward III women appeared occasionally on horseback armed with daggers. Orderic Vitalis glorifies Isabella de Couches as a generous and valorous woman in war, mounted and equipped as a knight, and equaling Camilla,

Hippolyta, and Penthesilea. A few actually fought in the Crusades, and gave active assistance to the wearied knights, notably in the last battle of Antioch, whilst others followed Godfrey de Bouillon to Jerusalem.

Another great feudal lady, hardly less remarkable than Joan of Arc, was Matilda, Countess of Tuscany (1046-1115), who, at the age of fifteen, girded on her sword and rode with her mother, Beatrix, and her stepfather, Godfrey of Lorraine, at the head of the Tuscan forces, when the Normans threatened Rome. Her subsequent life is one of the great chapters of eleventh-century history. To her, more than to any single individuality, the Papacy owed its continuity and its great estates, much of them her gift. She fought for years, often single-handed, against the great combination in support of the antipopes—a combination which included Germany and most of Italy.

Her devotion to the Papacy was only surpassed by her devotion to Pope Gregory VII, her beautiful friendship with whom is one of the great friendships of history. Gregory always called her "daughter of Peter"; and yet, for all her piety, she was more a soldier than a saint. An old chronicler speaks of *sa virilité Chrétienne*—her Christian virility—and she is represented as wearing "a conical iron crown, studded with pearls and other jewels," the rest of her costume, however, being of a feminine richness and coquetry as befitted her beautiful if soldierly womanhood.

#### WOMEN WHO HAVE RULED FRANCE

Blanche of Castile was another of the great feudal ladies more than capable of doing a king's work. This she did for many years for her young son, Louis IX, afterward to be known as St. Louis. For ten years (1226-1236), Blanche of Castile was absolute ruler of France. It was her strong hand, and her combination of political intelligence and womanly tact and charm, that did much to weld the nation into a whole, in spite of the constant centrifugal efforts of the great lords. Miss Mabell Smith, in her brilliant book on "Twenty Centuries of Paris," has remarked on the fact that no country has been more frequently ruled by women, and she makes this interesting summary in support of her statement:

Isabella of Hainault, Philip Augustus's first wife, was regent when her lord went to the third crusade in 1189.

Blanche of Castile governed her son's kingdom for ten years (1226-1236).

Anne de Beaujeu, daughter of Louis XI, guided the realm of her brother, Charles VIII, from 1483 to 1490.

Louise de Savoie ruled (1515) until her son, Francis I, came of age, and was again entrusted with the power when he went upon one of his many military expeditions.

Catherine de Médicis, the mother of three kings—Francis II, Charles IX, and Henry III—began her career as a ruler when her husband, Henry II, was warring with Germany (1552), continued it unofficially during the short reign of Francis II, was legal regent (1560) during the minority of Charles IX, and enjoyed a long continuance of influence because of his and his brother Henry III's weakness of character, which she herself had fostered.

Marie de Médicis (1610) played havoc with Henry IV's reorganized France during the long minority of her son Louis XIII.

Maria Theresa controlled the kingdom of Louis XIV while the Sun King was carrying war into Holland.

Marie Louise was declared regent when Napoleon left France (1812-1814).

Eugénie took her husband's place when Napoleon III fought against Austria (1859), and again (1870) when he left his capital, never to return to it, during the ill-advised contest with Prussia.

But generalship and valor among women all over Europe, through feudal times and far later, so long, indeed, as castles continued to be defensible places, were by no means limited to queens and royal princesses. The *châtelaine* of every high-perched stronghold, or even the lady of the moated grange, during the absence of her warrior husband, stood ready to defend it to the death against his return. Even lady abbesses had their men-at-arms, and could withstand a siege no less professionally than their lay sisters.

In these sieges the women servants often took no less important a share than the men. Aside from their traditional task of caring for the wounded, it was they who prepared the boiling oil, the molten lead, and the scalding water, which were such important and formidable materials of defense in those days. Side by side with the men, they would hurl them from the battlements into the faces of the unlucky besiegers mounting the scaling ladders or battering at the great gates.

#### WOMEN IN MANY WARS

In England, in Elizabeth's time, apart from the martial spirit of the queen herself, women of high and low degree rallied, so to speak, "as one man," to defeat the Armada. One lady, Lady Cholmondeley,

"the bold lady of Cheshire," was actually knighted by Elizabeth for her courage. During the Civil War the cavalier women stood by King Charles no less valiantly than their brothers, and several stories are told of great ladies holding their castles and country seats successfully against the Roundheads while their husbands were fighting in some distant field.

Similarly, in the war of the Fronde, during the regency of Louis XIV—called in derision the Ladies' War—it was the leading part taken by women, particularly by the Duchess de Longueville, that gave it its nickname. Both the Duchess de Longueville and Mlle. de Montpensier held military commands, and had on their staff ladies of quality to act as *aides-de-camp*. The Duc d'Orléans addressed a letter to "*mesdames* the countess-marshals of the camp in the army of my daughter against Mazarin."

But while the martial doings of great ladies are part of the history of every country, the story of woman as a soldier in the ranks remains to be written. In the gossip of history one occasionally finds the story of a girl who, contriving somehow to get a uniform, ran away to war, as a boy runs away to sea, preferring an exciting death to the humdrum domesticity of home; but romance has not done sufficient justice to these episodes.

Such is the story of a Flemish girl who, when England was carrying on one of her innumerable wars in Flanders, joined the Dutch army and fought bravely, sharing her tent as a good comrade with a brother soldier, who did not discover the sex of his companion till after some weeks of fighting. With the discovery, they became lovers, keeping their secret, however, to themselves. Her lover killed, and the war ended, the girl, still as loath as ever to embrace a domestic life, disguised herself as a sailor. After a series of vicissitudes, she was captured by pirates, the most singular part of the story being that the captain of the pirate ship was also a woman in disguise. This female pirate, being taken with the good looks of the supposed sailorman whom she had captured, one day literally unbosomed herself to "him." Thus "he" was compelled to do the same—with what tableau the reader can imagine.

Apart from such sporadic instances of romantic daredevil girls, the French Revolution, as might be expected, first evolved the

woman soldier as anything like an institution. I quote again from Emil Reich:

At least fifty such are recorded—mostly girls—who actually took their share in active warfare. One was only sixteen. The best known are Felicity and Theophila Fernig, daughters of an official on the Belgian frontier. Attired in male clothing, they joined in the resistance of the peasants against the Austrians, and by permission of Dumouriez entered the army, being subsequently taken prisoners. After they were released, they again fought at Jemappes, and their good name was as much vaunted as their beauty. Most of the more middle-aged Amazons preferred to enter the cavalry, and many received pensions on account of wounds or for heroic conduct.

#### THE MIRACLE OF JOAN OF ARC

But, of course, the crowning example and archetype of the woman as soldier is Joan of Arc, perhaps the noblest and strangest figure in human history, and one which—for she and her story are as well authenticated as, say, Napoleon and his story—does more to discredit merely materialistic theories of human life than any other figure of recorded time. Let certain modern critics do all they please to give rational explanations of the *modus operandi* of her achievements—her “voices” and visions, her belief in her divine mission, and so forth—they cannot explain away her achievements.

They cannot deny that she saved France at a most critical period of its history, nor can they deny that it was as a soldier she saved it. The miserable king and his lords had been unable to save it. The experienced captains, whom we are told she had with her as the real generals at the taking of Orléans, with all their experience, had not been able to take the city before. No one claims that she was a military genius, but it is evident that she brought something to the siege which had not been present in the French armies before. Wherever that power had come from, “voices” or visions, it was mysteriously present in her. It proved, perhaps, more strangely than the fact has ever been proved before, that the battle is not always to the strong.

Joan of Arc brought that faith in, and enthusiasm for, a sacred cause, with which her memory did more than any single influence to inspire the wonderful hearts of her brave countrymen in the dark hours of the great war. She is the spirit of France personified, as she is also the embodiment of that spirit in woman which laughs at logic and wins a cause by passionately aim-

ing at the impossible. She had, too, the disregard of her own life which characterizes soldiers and women alike. Not only did she inspire her men, but—just as some of the greatest commanders of ancient and modern times have similarly violated the wise rule that forbids them to take undue risks—she led them on in the forefront of the fighting. She was the first to place a scaling-ladder against the walls of Orléans, and was slightly wounded. Recovering, she again led a charge, and by torchlight entered the city, where she marched at once to the cathedral for a solemn “Te Deum.”

She was wounded again in the assault on Paris, and gave her orders lying in a ditch. This and the other facts of her career are well known, and are only recalled here to emphasize that, while she was above all what we can only call a divine influence in a world at the moment exceptionally dark, corrupt, and cowardly, she was at the same time a wonderful soldier, and by her combination of qualities did a work for which it is idle to offer small explanations. She is the noblest example of her sex in its mystery, its nearness to unseen and unknown forces, its purity, its devotion, its idealism, its courage, that has ever appeared upon the earth.

So much for a very desultory survey of woman as a soldier in the past. Of course, I have done little more than to suggest the mass of evidence which exists to show that, even in times when the methods of warfare pressed harder on their physical disabilities, women have none the less been able to direct its operations and even handle its weapons with high courage and success. I think the evidence shows that had women been physically the equals of men—and not all of them, by any means, have been man's inferiors—they would have proved very much the better soldiers.

#### WOMEN'S SHARE IN MODERN WAR

The corollary from this statement is that the modern changes in the practise of warfare have actually, among all the other careers now open to women, brought this fearful career within their reach. *Absit omen*, indeed—but there is no doubt of the facts.

Heroic women, since Clara Barton and Florence Nightingale, have made it their sacred profession to take the risks of war with men, for the purpose of healing their wounds. In the war just closed, those risks

were immeasurably increased by an enemy to whom nothing was sacred, and to whom a hospital was as fair a target as a battery; but woman came forward to defy all perils in an unexampled spirit of *camaraderie* with man, and a fearlessness at least the match of his own. But this side of woman's work in war is, as has already been said, more or less traditional. She has always been Our Lady of Pity. On a small scale, as we know, she has been a fighter also. But now we have seen her preparing to be a fighter on a large scale.

She has been busy in multitudes on the sinister industry of manufacturing the weapons. Who, a few years ago, dreamed of the possibility of a gentle, pretty girl becoming a munitions worker? But she has shown herself expert in making horrible engines of destruction, the sight of which, not long ago, would have made her faint. The war proved that there is absolutely nothing which man has been accustomed to regard as his special masculine activity that a woman cannot do as well. Therefore, she has become a gun-maker and a cartridge-maker.

And war has so many other implements nowadays besides guns—automobiles and telephones, for example. Women can certainly match man at these new weapons. If a woman can drive automobiles on Fifth Avenue, she can certainly drive them at the front; and if she can be a "central" in New York, what is to prevent her being the same behind the firing-line?

Then, again, take the airplane. As peace fliers, racers, and long-distance mail-carriers, women have more than won their spurs already. What possible reason is there to prevent them from being air-fighters? A squadron of Amazonian aces is even more feasible than the Russian Battalion of Death, and would probably be far more death-dealing.

And long-distance guns, which need no muscles to operate them when once set in position, only a head for mathematics and the pressing of a button—what is to prevent women from working them? In fact, there is scarcely any important activity in modern warfare, with the exception of hand-to-hand combat, for which women are not thoroughly competent.

It follows that from the highest war activity of all—that of a commander-in-chief—there is absolutely nothing to debar a woman. As battles go at present, a commanding general might as well be a disem-

bodied spirit for all the real fighting he is called upon to do. What is asked of him is a brain, a strategical, mathematical brain. Now at least two of the world's greatest mathematicians have been women, and strategy has always been regarded as instinctive in their sex.

There is no reason whatever, therefore, why future wars should not be fought by women generals as well as men generals. There is no reason why some dainty young woman in chiffons, with a cigarette between her lips—as safe from the real fighting as a thunder-browed Hindenburg—should not sit watching a map, every once in a while pressing a button or taking up a telephone, the destiny of her nation in her hands. This may be frivolously stated, but it is something that might all too easily come true.

Let us pray, on the other hand, that it may never come true. In fact, I believe that women and men have fought this war to prevent its coming true, and to prevent the making of war again forever.

For, however good a soldier woman has been and can be, there is one reason which makes war for her not merely the most tragic of conditions, but the most unnatural and even sacrilegious of activities. That reason is her motherhood. She, the mysterious giver of life, and its nurse—shall she be its slayer, too? With one hand give life, with the other take it away? The idea is unthinkable, and this horror the soul of goodness in the world will never permit.

But a great woman, Olive Schreiner, is more in court here than I, and with her splendid corroborative words I shall end:

It is especially in the domain of war that we, the bearers of men's bodies, who supply its most valuable munition, who, not amid the clamor and ardor of battle, but singly and alone with a three-in-the-morning courage, shed our blood and face death that the battle-field might have its food, a food more precious to us than our heart's blood; it is we especially who, in the domain of war, have our word to say, a word no man can say for us. *It is our intention to enter into the domain of war, and to labor there till in the course of generations we have extinguished it.*

In this closing sentence, which I have italicized, Miss Schreiner says, I think, the final explanatory word of woman's attitude toward the war just ended, and of her ardent cooperation in it. Like most of the men who fought in it, she fought it out to the end in order that it might be the last war.

# The Odd Measure

There Will Be  
an Official  
History of the  
Great War

*A Historical  
Branch Has Been  
Specially Organized  
to Compile It*

THE War Department is going to publish an official history of the great war—that is, of America's share in it. The General Staff has organized the necessary agencies, and the task is already in hand.

The newly formed Historical Branch has its quarters at the War College, a mile down the river from Washington, where a point of land juts out into the Potomac. Half a mile of parkway separates this dignified building from any influence so clamorous as that of traffic on a conventional thoroughfare. The argosies of trade float by on the historic waterway, and overhead soar many airmen, for Bolling Field is but a little farther down. In the archives of the college rests the information, secret and otherwise, upon which the nation fights its wars, for this is the home of the War Plans Division of the General Staff.

The creation of a Historical Branch grew out of conversations over the cable between General Pershing, in France, and General Bliss, in Washington, then chief of staff. Up to that time—February, 1918—our government had paid no official attention to military history. The wars of the past have been recorded only in an incidental way and by volunteer historians. There has been no regular system of storing war records, and to-day at least one important repository for such information is a rented garage.

An inquiry was made into similar activities on the part of other nations. It was found that Great Britain organized such an agency in 1903, and that its first product was a four-volume record of the South African War. It was studying the Russo-Japanese War when interrupted in 1914.

France established a Historical Section in 1884, the duty of which was to prepare an account of each of the campaigns of the French army. It had devoted much time to a study of the Franco-Prussian War.

The Germans had maintained a similar department in their army since 1816. With typical Teutonic capacity for misapplying a good idea, it had worked industriously for a hundred years in twisting facts to bolster the theory of German superiority, rather than in properly recording history.

When it was decided to create a Historical Branch, the General Staff sought for the proper man to head it, and selected Colonel Charles W. Weeks. He had been honor graduate of the Army School of the Line in 1911, had been an instructor at the War College, and was then serving at Camp Custer, in Michigan. He comes from the Middle West, having been born in Iowa and educated at the University of Nebraska, where Pershing was military instructor in the early nineties. He enlisted as a private at the time of the Spanish-American War, won a lieutenancy, and went into the regular army. He is now forty-two years old.

Colonel Weeks has been building up his staff. He is to have three or four colonels, half a dozen majors, and perhaps a dozen captains and lieutenants. The quality of these men may be judged by two of the early assignments. There is Major John Bigelow, for instance, son of the famous diplomat of that name, educated in European capitals, a graduate of West Point, who retired after thirty years' service, taught language and military science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and elsewhere, and wrote several historical works. Another assistant is Major Frederic Logan Paxson, who has been professor of history in the Universities of Colorado, Wisconsin, and Michigan; has represented the Carnegie Institution as a worker in the British archives, and has written "The Last American Frontier," "The Civil War," and "The New Nation."

The first task of the Historical Branch is the compilation of material. It hopes that every division, and every unit not assigned to a division,

before disbanding, or as soon thereafter as practicable, will forward to the adjutant-general a history of its creation and its participation in the war, or its preparation to do so. Private letters and diaries will also be accepted and made part of the great reservoir of fact which is now being filled.

The actual writing of the official history has already begun. This is not a matter of haste, however, and it is held that the spirit of mellow deliberation should pervade the work. It is probable that successive volumes, to the number of at least twenty, and perhaps as many as fifty, will issue during the next few years from the presses of the Government Printing Office. They will give as nearly complete and accurate a record as can be compiled of our participation in the great struggle for democracy.

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**Belgium Once  
More Sings the  
"Brabançonne"**

*The Interesting  
History of a  
Little-Known  
National Anthem*

ONCE more, from end to end of Flanders and Brabant, the subjects of King Albert may let their national anthem ring in the welkin. The privilege was dearly bought, but is not a thing bought by sacrifice ever more precious to the human soul than one gained without effort? With what deepened feeling the Belgians must now be singing there—"For king, for right, for liberty!"

Of the anthems of all our European allies, the "Brabançonne" is least known among us, except perhaps the Serbian national song. Its melody is not of the popular kind that remains in the memory of Americans whose musical education is limited to musical comedy and rag-time. In their estimation, the "Brabançonne" is "not catchy," and therefore not to be bothered about. Moreover, there has never been an attempt to popularize the Belgian anthem with an English text.

Rouget de l'Isle's splendid battle-call, which by a whim of history is called "La Marseillaise," is almost as familiar to us as "The Star-Spangled Banner." The barrel-organs in our city streets have ground into us the Italian royal march and "Garibaldi's Hymn." Every American schoolboy will tell you that "God Save the King" is the same as our "America"—"only we've got the right kind of words and they haven't!" But practically none of us know the text of the "Brabançonne," few the music, and fewer still its history, which is as interesting as that of the "Marseillaise."

The "Brabançonne," as sung to-day, is not at all what it was in the beginning, except for the music and the title. This beginning does not date back farther than eighty-nine years, to the year of revolution when Belgium won her independence from King William of Holland, while the bourgeoisie of France lifted to the throne Louis Philippe of Orléans, after having ousted Charles X of the older Bourbon branch.

The music of the Belgian anthem was written by François van Campenhout, a musician in the orchestra of the royal theater at Brussels, his native town, who later proved himself not only a successful tenor on Belgian, French, and Dutch stages, but also a composer of all kinds of music, from songs to symphonies and operas. He was fifty-one years old when he produced the "Brabançonne," the one piece, after all, which made him a figure in the history of music.

The first text was written by a French actor in Brussels, whose name was Louis Dechez, but who called himself Jenneval. It was violently anti-monarchic—in fact, as nearly Bolshevik as anything could be at that essentially bourgeois time. It vilified the Dutch king unmercifully. Later, when Leopold I had become King of the Belgians, and had won their respect and affection, Jenneval's text was set aside as unsuitable to the new conditions. Not that the benevolent Leopold objected to it, as is proved by the fact that he made Campenhout master of the royal chapel and gave Jenneval a yearly pension. But the Belgians themselves felt that they were too thoroughly done with King William to continue berating him in their first and only national song.

Many attempts were made to fit new words to the music, but for years none were successful. In 1848 a man named Loulon wrote a text beginning "*La liberté si salutaire*," and four years later one Hymans brought forth another. Meanwhile, the composer himself turned poet and set words to his own music; and this last is the version which the people of Belgium definitely adopted. They are not like the fine poetry of Rouget de l'Isle, but neither literary nor musical merit has much to do with the singing of national anthems; it is a matter of the heart.

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### The Head of the Military Intelligence Division

*An Officer Who  
Rose from  
Captain to  
Brigadier-General  
Within a Year*

SINCE it is the duty of the General Staff to do the thinking for the army, and since the Military Intelligence Division supplies that august body with the facts upon which to base its judgments, the post of Brigadier-General Marlborough Churchill during the great war was one of much importance; for General Churchill was chief of military intelligence.

By the time the reader has got thus far he has probably, as is the custom with readers, visualized this learned soldier, the repository of so vast a fund of professional information. No doubt he is a veteran of long service and studious aspect, with gray hair and spectacles. He is a man of few words. He is martinetish, cloistered, difficult of approach.

Wrong, all but the last. General Churchill is difficult of access. Military Intelligence is the repository of the war secrets of the nation, and therefore not a place about which the casual visitor may wander at will. In fact, one must be identified and must have a written pass before he may go inside. Then he must be accompanied by a guard to the very desk of the individual he is visiting. When the interview comes to an end, he must be personally escorted to the front door and checked out.

It is so that one goes to see General Churchill, in a rambling old building on F Street, in Washington. Once over the barriers, however, and the preconceived picture fades. The general's door is wide open. You enter, and you are received by the most genial man in the world. And can this be a general? Are they picking them so young these days? As a matter of fact, General Churchill is just turned forty, a hale and hearty man of the tactful but dynamic type that is commoner in the business world than in the army.

It is noteworthy that this right-hand man of General March is not even a West Pointer. He graduated from Harvard eighteen years ago. His father had been a professor in the theological seminary at Andover, Massachusetts. After service with heavy artillery in the Massachusetts National Guard, young Churchill was commissioned a second lieutenant in the regular army from civil life at the age of twenty-three.

Then followed ten years as an artillery officer—three at Baltimore, two at Fort Riley, four at Fort Sam Houston, one in the Philippines. He got his captaincy in 1911. Then came four years of service as an instructor, and in 1915 he was assigned to the French army as an observer for our War Department. That, of course, gave him a rare opportunity to learn the practical details of modern warfare.

Captain Churchill was executive officer of the American military mission which hurried to France when the United States entered the war. When the Expeditionary Force arrived, he joined Pershing's intelligence section, and was afterward on the staff of General March at artillery headquarters of the First Army, of which he finally became artillery chief of staff. When March returned to the United States and became chief of staff at the War Department, he called his young associate in France to take charge of Military Intelligence. So, within a year, Captain Churchill became successively major, lieutenant-colonel, colonel, and brigadier-general.

General March himself says that Military Intelligence is the most vital division of the General Staff. While the war has been going on, its activities have been withheld from the public; but some day its history may be

published, and then may the world come to know that this government built up, during the war, a secret service which rivaled Scotland Yard, and which successfully challenged the much advertised spy system of Germany.

\* \* \* \* \*

If Germany  
Had Not  
Surrendered  
When She Did

*She Would Have  
Heard from Colonel  
Walker and the  
Edgewood Arsenal*

THE great war enlisted the services of almost every branch of science, and many a technical expert found himself called from a life of study or teaching to a place in the cohorts of Mars. One such man, to whom there fell work of special interest and importance, was William H. Walker, professor of chemical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, later colonel in the United States army, and chief official manufacturer of lethal gases.

Colonel Walker was one of the first recruits to the board of chemists commissioned by the government to deal with the problems rising out of the introduction of poison gas in warfare. It was soon found that the only effective method of handling the situation was to produce sufficient quantities of the deadly stuff to make it possible for the Allies to outdo the German in his own specialty. Prior to this war poison gases had never been manufactured in bulk. The task had been a new one even to Germany.

England and France had already begun the manufacture of phosgen and mustard gas, and had produced them on a scale comparable with that of the enemy. The American problem was to bring to bear our unique facilities for quantity production, and by so doing to set a new standard in gas warfare. It was decided that an arsenal should be built and devoted exclusively to this purpose. Since it was desirable to keep the scheme secret as far as possible, an isolated region in Maryland, bordering on the Atlantic, was selected, and there, in the early months of 1918, were set up the various units of a great industrial establishment which was to produce such quantities of man-killing poisons as the world had never dreamed of.

Scientific men knew the theories for producing these poisonous gases—knew how it had been done in the laboratory; but their manufacture in hundreds and thousands of tons, and the handling of these great quantities after being manufactured, involved entirely new problems. In building such a plant it became necessary that the reaction in a test-tube should be reproduced on the scale of an industry occupying scores of buildings and scattered over hundreds of acres of ground. The men of science, with their formulas carefully worked out, called in the most experienced and best-proved executives that the nation could furnish, and set them to making theory into reality.

So did a plant come into being which, at the signing of the armistice, was producing more poison gas than all of the rest of the world combined.

Few people probably appreciate the fact that the principal basis of the new terror that has been added to warfare is nothing more than everyday table-salt. Table-salt, in science, is sodium chlorid, and the first process in the manufacture of practically all the poisonous gases is to separate the chlorin from the sodium. The greatest of the units at Edgewood Arsenal is the chlorin plant. Water is saturated with salt, and electricity is sent through the brine solution at a high voltage. The chlorin is freed and carried away in pipes, as a gas; the sodium is salvaged in solid form and made available for industrial use.

The chlorin so secured is the identical yellowish-green gas which the Germans first unleashed at Ypres in April, 1915, and which rolled down upon the French Colonials and the Canadians, taking a heavy toll of lives. With a little scientific juggling it became the still more deadly phosgen of the later attacks, and it is one of the chief elements entering into the manufacture of mustard gas, the most dangerous of them all.

When the armistice came, America was prepared to dominate the military situation in so far as it depended on the use of gas. By spring we should

have been turning out ten times as much phosgen and mustard gas as Germany could produce, and should have been prepared to deluge the enemy with a veritable avalanche of destruction. Colonel Walker, who in rare degree combines scientific erudition with executive ability, had performed one of the most remarkable tasks of the war.

\* \* \* \* \*

### The Long and Honorable History of the Oyster

*And Its Value as  
an Item in the  
Menu of the  
Patriotic  
American*

"FOOD will win the war," Mr. Hoover told us, and he can point to the German collapse as a justification of his slogan. We must still economize, we are warned, but we need not stint ourselves if we use judgment in catering. For instance, we can insure a plentiful supply of meat for our soldiers and sailors by eating more fish.

Let us not forget that oysters are in season, and that they are too perishable to be sent abroad. Dickens wrote in 1842:

The air of New York, being impregnated with the flavor of last year's oysters, has a surprising effect in rendering the human frame supple and flexible in all cases of rust.

As long ago as 1599 it was declared unseasonable and unwholesome to eat an oyster in months that have not an "r" in their names; but in still earlier times they thought differently, for it was then the pious belief that whoever ate oysters on St. James's Day, July 25, would not want money for the rest of the year. Long after St. James's shrine went out of fashion there was in London an oyster-sellers' street cry: "Remember the Grotto!"—a testimony that tradition dies hard.

An old Roman named Apicius knew a secret for keeping oysters fresh all the year round. Loyal citizen that he was, he supplied the Emperor Trajan during his campaign in Persia with oysters from Baïæ as fresh as if they had just been taken from the sea. Apicius took his secret with him.

England has long been famous for oysters. Oysters from Rutupia—Richborough, in Kent—are mentioned by Juvenal, and the "Emsworth natives," of Hayling Bay, are chronicled in the "Domesday Book." The Hebrews were forbidden to eat oysters, but the Greeks were fond of them, though Clement of Alexandria condemns them as the delight of the hedonist.

The oyster seems to have been known to all European peoples, but not to their kinsmen of Asia. This is an etymological deduction. The word is common in one form or another to all the European languages. The Armenian *osdry* perhaps gets as near to the original form as any other, and seems to have its root in the Sanskrit word for shell or kernel. It has been suggested that the hardness of the shell gave rise to the appellation; but the word-hunters go farther, and tell us that the Indo-European tribes first met the oyster at the Caspian Sea on their journey toward the setting sun, and carried its name with them in various forms.

There is a whole world of history in the word and its modifications—in a sense that *Pistol* never meant when he declared with a flourish that the world was his oyster, which he proposed to open with his sword. *Touchstone* speaks slightly of the unpretentious mollusk. "Honesty," he says, "dwells like a miser in a poor house, as your pearl in your oyster." But Thackeray loved oysters, especially the big ones that he got in America. Lewis Carroll's *Walrus* and *Carpenter* treated them shamefully. La Fontaine used them to point a witty epigram at the expense of the law. He tells us how two travelers once found an oyster. Both claimed it, and went to law over it, but *Dandin*, the judge, opened it, ate the oyster, and gave each a shell, telling them to go in peace.

In northern regions oysters spawn in May and June, and at that time and for some time afterward are not considered desirable for food; so there is wisdom in avoiding them in the months that have no "r."

# The Mountain Woman<sup>\*</sup>

BY CHARLES NEVILLE BUCK

Author of "The Call of the Cumberlands," "The Battle-Cry," etc.

## XXI

**T**AKEN unawares by Halloway's fierce and sudden embrace, Alexander made no struggle. It would have been futile to match even her fine strength against the herculean power of those arms.

Moreover, the wave of amazement that swept over her had left her gasping, bereft of both nerve-force and breath. For a moment this girl of ready and invincible spirit rested inert in Halloway's grasp.

Yet other waves were sweeping her, too. She had thought of this man with feelings that she had neither named to herself nor analyzed, but the unadmitted sex call of the strong man to the strong woman had sounded like a bugle-note through her nature. Now, even while the beginnings of an indescribable fury stirred within her, she none the less thrilled to his embrace with a flooding of her heart under which she almost swooned. While she felt his passionate kisses on her temples, her cheeks, and her lips she had no power of speech or protest.

To Jack Halloway, it seemed that her non-resistance was unconditional surrender, and through him ran the fierce ecstasy of victory like a current of fluid fire. But after a little while Alexander straightened up, and the pliant softness of her body stiffened in his arms. She pushed against his shoulders with steady hands. They were not struggling hands, but they were firm and definite of meaning, and Halloway released her. He released her readily, like a man who could afford to be deferential in his moment of victory.

When she was quite free, she stood unsteadily for a moment and then stepped back and leaned against the wall of the house. Her hands pressed against the weather-boarding with outspread fingers. Her face was white, and she looked straight

before her with eyes preternaturally wide, as if utterly dazed.

At first there was no resentment, no denunciation. The girl only leaned there with parted lips and heaving bosom, and that fixed gaze which, for all its rigid tenacity, seemed to be groping for something. She was thinking, not exactly of Jack Halloway, but rather of the terrifying and unexplained force that he had awakened in herself—the force of things that she never until now realized.

Halloway did not speak. He bent a little toward her, looking at her, and his own breath came fast. He did not even marvel at the stunned, groping blankness of the girl's unmoving features. He had known that when Alexander awoke it would be with the shock of latent fires set loose. Now it was a time to go very gently with her, until she found her footing again in fuller comprehension.

Then the girl said, so faintly that he could hardly hear her:

"That's the fust time thet—"

She broke off there.

"I know it, Alexander. I couldn't stay away. I had to come!"

He took a step forward with outstretched arms, but she lifted a pleading hand.

"Don't!" she said. "I've got ter think. Go away, now."

Triumphantly confident of the result of her meditation, he turned and picked up his hat and left her standing there. He might have talked to her of passionate love, he told himself, to the end of time, and it would have meant nothing. Instead, he had brought her face to face with it—and now there was no need of talk!

Jack Halloway had been only too honest when he admitted to Brent in New York that it would not do to give rein to his thoughts of Alexander. They were lawless thoughts of a love not to be tram-

<sup>\*</sup> Copyright, 1918, by Charles Neville Buck—This story began in the November number of *MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE*

meled by the obligations of marriage. If he hated the civilized world at times, there were other times when Halloway could not live without it, and into its conventionalized pattern Alexander would never fit. She was not civilized enough or educated enough to take her place there at his side, nor was she pagan enough to come to him without terms or conditions; so he had resolved to stay away from her, to put her out of his mind.

In that determination he failed. Now he had flung away all scruples. He had held her in his arms, and the consequences could care for themselves!

But when he had left the porch, and Alexander had begun to grope her way out of the vortex of confusion, the wrath which she had known she would feel, but which at first she had failed to feel, began to grow until it engulfed and merged into itself every other element of her reflections.

She had been scornful when Brent questioned her ability or permanent wish to repulse suitors; and yet, after only two had come, she no longer knew her own mind. She told herself with a solemn indignation that at least she wanted to make her own terms. She had no intention of being swept off her feet by the masterful passion of a man who had never pleaded for her love; yet that was the very thing that had just occurred.

Slowly the stunned eyes in the waxen face became less wonder-wide and began to smolder with outraged realization. She rose with the fixed determination that before the sun set she would either kill Halloway or compel him to kill her. One of them must die!

And then her own ideas of fairness challenged that edict. If she had the right to assume such a ground, she should have taken it without any instant of faltering. She should never have acknowledged an impulse of thrill while she was held close in his arms. She had let him think that she had not resented it, and she was as much to blame as he.

So when Halloway came back the next morning, with a glow of eagerness in his face, he found a very quiet girl waiting to receive him. When he would have taken her in his arms, she once more put out a warning hand, but this time with a different expression of lip and eye.

"Stop!" she said. "Me an' you hev got ter talk together."

"Thet suits me, Alexander," he assured her. "Thar hain't nothin' else I'd ruther do—save ter hold ye in my arms!"

"I reckon ye knows I've done took oath thet no man could ever come on this place sparkin'."

"I war right glad ter hev ye say thet! Hit kept other fellers away, an' any man thet hit could skeer off wasn't hardly wuth hevin' round nohow; but thet war afore ye fell in love with me."

"Fell in love with ye?" She repeated the words after him in an even tone. "Jack Halloway, when ye went away from hyar yestiddy evenin', an' I'd sat thar fer a full measured hour an' thought, I 'lowed thar warn't a soul on earth thet I hated so much as you. I'd done med up my mind ter kill ye afore I laid down ter sleep!"

There was a quiet implacability about this new manner that disquieted the man a little, but he said gravely:

"Them feelin's jest comes about because what ye felt yestiddy war all new ter ye, Alexander. They're nat'ral enough, but they won't endure."

She went on, ignoring his protestations.

"The only reason I didn't kill ye war thet I'd done let ye, an' I hated myself next as bad as you. Folks tells me thet I hain't always goin' ter want ter turn men back. Mebbly thet's true."

"Ye knows full well a'ready thet hit's true!" he declared vehemently.

"Be thet as hit may, no man's ter wed me without he woos me fust, an' no man hain't never goin' ter lay a hand on me without I consents. Now I aims ter try an' fergit erbout yestiddy—an' you'd better fergit hit, too!"

The man's eyes broke into vehement challenge.

"So long as thar's life in me I won't fergit hit!"

"I reckon ye'd better hear me out," she reminded him with an ominous note. He nodded his head, waiting, while she continued: "Yestiddy I seemed crazed, but terday I hain't. Ye 'pears ter be right sartin thet I loves ye. I don't know, but I either loves ye or I hates ye like sin. Ef I loves ye, I kain't kill ye; an' ef I hates ye, thar's time enough."

"But, Alexander, you do love me! I know—"

"Waal, I don't—an' thet's a right pithy point, ter my manner of thinkin'. Ye're a right masterful sort of feller, an' ye likes

ter plow yore way through life gloryin' in yore strength an' forcin' yore will on weaker folks." She paused an instant, and then added significantly: "But I'm a right masterful sort of woman myself, an' I hain't ter be nowise driven. Ef you an' me kain't consort peaceable, I reckon we'll kill each other afore we finish up our warfare!"

As he looked at her, his admiration was flaming. Possibly it was best, just now, to advance slowly.

"I'm willin' ter wait," he conceded slowly. "Ye're wuth hit!"

"Ye says I loves ye. If I finds thet out fer myself, in due course I'll wed with ye. If I don't, I won't, but"—her voice broke so suddenly out of the quiet tone in which it had been pitched that her climax of words came like a sharp thunder-clap on still air—"but if ye seeks ter force me, or if ever ergin ye lays a hand on me, or teches me, twell I tells ye ye kin, afore God in heaven, one of us has got ter die! An' I won't never be with ye unarmed, nuther."

Halloway did not judge it a good time to say that her allusion to marriage left a rather wide territory of debate open. One thing at a time seemed enough, and more than enough.

Alexander had not asked him to enter her house, and he inquired calmly:—

"Now thet ye've stated yore terms, an' I've done agreed ter 'em, hain't ye goin' ter invite me in?"

"No," she said shortly. "I makes the laws in my own household. Ye air goin' away, an' ye hain't comin' back hyar fer one week. I aims ter be left alone for a spell. Ef them terms don't suit ye, ye needn't come back at all."

## XXII

In that week of reprieved decision Alexander took her life to pieces and searchingly examined it, item by item. Some strange reactions were taking place in the laboratory of her inner self. She was no more seen in breeches and boots. She had self-contemptuously decided that if she could not hold undeviatingly to her strongest tenet, but became a palpitant woman when a man seized her in his arms, she would throw overboard the whole sorry pretense. Henceforth she would be frankly and avowedly a woman, but a woman different from those about her, giving up none of the leadership that was in her blood or the pride that was her birthright.

One afternoon she met Jerry O'Keefe on the road, and with the old, unabashed twinkle in his eye he accosted her.

"I hear tell the big feller's back," he began. The girl flushed. "Hev ye done run him off'n yore place, too?"

"Thet's my business."

"Yes, *thet* is, but yore runnin' me off's right severely *mine*!"

"Mebby I've got a rather who comes thar."

"So hev I." There was a lurking, somewhat engaging impertinence even in Jerry's quietest rejoinders—a humorous boldness and self-confidence. "Howsomever, I reckon ye're kinderly skeered thet I'd make ye think too towerin' much of me. I reckon ye durstn't trust yoreself!"

Alexander looked at him, and for all her attempted severity she could not keep the twinkle out of her own pupils. If she had not succeeded in driving Halloway away, why should she pretend to banish Jerry? There was even a faint challenge of coquetry in her manner as she disdainfully announced:

"Ef thet's the way I'm feedin' yore vanity, come over whenever ye feels like hit. I'll strive ter endure ye, ef ye don't tarry too long."

"I kain't come afore ter-night. Hit's sundown now," was the instant response.

Things had not gone well with Jase Mal-lows. The wound that Bud had inflicted had healed slowly, and he had lain long bedridden. He had been the last of the gang to hear the sorry story of the robbers' humiliating failure, and the sequel recording the deaths of Lute and his lieutenant.

Now Jase heard that Alexander's door was no longer barred to men who came courting, and he returned home; but he came nursing a grudge against Bud, who had wounded him and set all his plans awry. For only one thing was he thankful—Alexander had no suspicion of his complicity in the effort to rob her.

But when Jase presented himself at Alexander's house, wearing a fancy waistcoat and a bright-colored tie, he learned to his discomfiture that the bars which had been lowered to others were still up and fixed against himself.

Bud Sellers, too, was far from happy, as he watched Alexander's doings from a distance. He knew that he was like a gray and inconspicuous moth enamored of a gor-

geous butterfly. She could never be thrilled by the colorless fidelity of a man who was simple almost to stupidity, even though he lived with no thought above his loyalty.

One day an almost unconquerable thirst came upon Bud. It attacked him suddenly as he passed the McGivins place, saw Halloway sitting on the porch talking with Alexander, and heard the peal of her responsive laughter.

The fatal appetite rode him like a witch, making capital of his nervous dejection. He tramped the woods, vainly struggling to submerge it in physical fatigue. Unfortunately it took a great deal of exertion to wear Bud down, and the mania of craving was as strong as his untiring muscles. By the purest of evil chance, too, he stumbled upon an illicit still, where an acquaintance was brewing moonshine whisky.

Bud had not known of the still, and had he sought to find it he probably could not have done so, for it was well hidden in dense thickets, and a man watched furtively with a ready rifle. But the "blockader" recognized young Sellers, and had no fears of his playing informer; so with an amused smile on his bearded face he stepped into sight with a tin cup held forth invitingly.

To Bud the potent odor was as the bouquet of ambrosia. It stole into his nostrils and set up in his brain insidious sensations of imagined delight. He pushed it back at first, then seized it, and gulped it greedily down.

Hurriedly he went away. He told himself that if he stopped there all would still be well; but it was almost as easy to tell a tiger that has tasted blood to lie down and be good. He must have more!

For a time Bud struggled; then he saddled a mule and went as fast as he could ride toward the nearest town. It was a race of endurance against a collapsing resolve. When he reached the village, he sought out the town marshal and excitedly begged:

"Fer God's sake lock me up in the jail-house! The cravin's done come on me afresh. I'm goin' mad ergin'!"

The town marshal knew the history of Bud's alcoholic periodicity, but he had no legal authority to jail a man on request in advance of any offense.

"Ye don't look drunk yit, Bud, albeit I'm afeared ye soon will be," he said. "I reckon I hain't hardly got the power ter jail ye without ye commits some misdeed."

Bud was at the end of his strength. In a

minute more, instead of pleading to be confined, he would be hunting for liquor. It was now or never. He picked up a broken brick that lay at his feet and hurled it through the glass window of a store before which they stood talking.

"Kin ye do hit now?" he demanded hoarsely.

"Yes, I reckon I kin—now," the town marshal replied.

Men have varied fashions of expressing their love of a woman. That night Jack Halloway sat on the moonlit porch of Alexander's house, while Bud sat in the vermin-infested cell of the village lockup; but as the hours went on the prisoner found a certain recompense in the thought that he was keeping a pledge.

As for Jerry O'Keefe, he was doing nothing at all that night except thinking certain things about the great fellow who was with the girl; but his thoughts were putting out roots of future conflict.

### XXIII

NOTHING had been heard of any Ku-klux operations since Alexander's adventure, and even of that episode no widely circulated story had gone abroad. Those who had worn the black masks were not likely to talk overmuch, and those who had made up Bud's force, for quite different reasons, were equally discreet. Since Alexander had won through safe and unrobbed, those who might be called her clansmen had few outstanding grudges to repay.

Jack Halloway, for example, had come out of the baggage-room, by way of the wrecked telegraph-office, with a satisfied heart. For him the matter was concluded, save that he had made three enemies who would nurse a malignant grievance and might seek, some day, to requite it with the ambushed rifle. The telegraph-operator had altogether disappeared from the country, and his two immediate confederates, who were "branch-water men," dwelling in some remote pocket of the hills, had withdrawn to their thicketed abodes.

Bud Sellers had pieced two and two together, and, though he kept a rigid silence on the subject, he had reached a conclusion. The house where Jase Mallows had been nursed back to health after his mysterious wounding was not far from the place where he and Brent had been ambushed. Jase's wound might have been the result of the shot that Bud had fired at the

rifle-flash. If that was true, Sellers had had the best of the encounter. If it was not true, he had no means of knowing to whom he owed an unpaid score for his "laywayin'."

He must keep an eye on Jase, however; for, if his inference was correct, Jase would never forget.

Besides the telegraph man, the only other principal actually or definitely known to any of Alexander's friends had been Lute Brown, and upon him they need spend no further thought. A long while after the tragedy had been played out, a woodsman passed the rotting cabin where Lute and his faithful partizan had died. So much time had passed that there was some difficulty in identifying the bodies. An inconclusive coroner's verdict left the matter stranded in mystery—and so it promised to remain.

Privately, the other conspirators, whose lips were sealed as to legal testimony, had hunted the assassin for several weeks, but without success. Occasionally, in widely separated places, a haggard and emaciated man was glimpsed, who always escaped unidentified and with ghostlike speed. Children were frightened with tales of his burning eyes, and in neighborhood gossip he was spoken of as the "wild man of the woods."

For when Lute Brown's murderer, fleeing for his life, had opened his parcel and discovered the worthlessness of his ill-gotten spoil, something snapped in his befuddled brain. He became an Ishmael driven before the torture of a fixed idea—terror of capture—until one day his body was found, worn to a skeleton, matted of beard and hair, and lying in a creek-bed at the foot of a cliff over which the assassin had fallen.

So the Kuklux became again only a name.

If, however, the men who had followed Alexander were willing to let sleeping dogs lie, the other faction had not only the rancor of defeat remaining with them, but also the incurable sting of uneasy consciences. At any time when drink loosened a careless tongue, dangerous hints might be dropped. At Coal City a newly elected commonwealth's attorney was manifesting a zealous interest in the mystery of those two dead bodies and all the surrounding facts.

The fact that Holloway knew at least two of their number by sight, if not by name, was another menace that hung over all of them. Since Jerry O'Keefe and Bud

Sellers were in the big man's confidence, they, as well as Alexander herself, fell into the gang's list of undesirable citizens.

But on the surface of life between Coal City and Shoulderblade, there was no outward ripple; no hint that fires still smoldered which might again leap to eruption. Men who had followed Lute and men who had been enlisted by Bud "met and made their manners" on the highway from time to time, without evidence of animosity.

Then, one day, when the early freshness of summer had been sunburned and freckled into a warmer fulness, a thing happened which stirred the sleeping dogs.

One of the three men of whom Holloway had disposed at the station—a man who bore ugly scars on his face where the handcuffs had marked him—became involved in a boundary dispute with a neighbor. A shooting affray followed, in which the neighbor fell wounded. The assailant was arrested and brought to the Coal City jail.

As he was being led thither, Holloway and Jerry O'Keefe, who chanced to be in town that day, came out of the court-house together. The coincidence was observed by a loungeur in the public square, who had been a pretended Kuklux man on that memorable day and night. Out of his own anxieties this fellow began weaving a pattern of fear.

He reasoned that if Holloway dropped a hint into the ear of the commonwealth's attorney, that official might go lightly with the prosecution for shooting and wounding, provided, as an exchange of courtesies, the prisoner helped him to ferret out the larger problem. Immunity might be offered to the gunman if he would turn State's evidence and make possible a number of true bills on still graver charges.

The loungeur kept Holloway and Jerry under observation until they left town. He satisfied himself that so far they had not talked with the prosecutor; but that carried no assurance for the future. Several consultations ensued, and certain measures were considered which did not enhance the safety of either Holloway or O'Keefe.

As the weeks passed, Holloway was less confident of victory over Alexander. That first swift moment of apparent triumph had not been followed by a satisfactory sequence of progressive steps. He had sought to wake the mountain girl out of her insensibility to the call of sex. In that he

had succeeded, too well for his own liking. Always Alexander held surprises in store for him, which only maddened him the more, fanning his passion into a hotter blaze. But when he sought to press his initial advantage to a greater conclusiveness, she only told him to wait. Like *Portia* judging her lovers, she allowed others to come and pay court to her as well, while over them all she reigned with a regal sort of despotism, encouraging no one more than another.

She was splendidly, vitally awake. She still did with joy the things that men did, and did them better than most men; but she was no longer blind to the strong asset of her arresting beauty and to the effect of its charm. She realized these newly discovered attributes naively and without vanity, but instead of insisting on the equality of a man, she now demanded the homage of a queen.

Though she would have found her world desolate without the tallest and keenest of her cavaliers, she no longer thought of him as the only important figure in the world that he had opened to her. Moreover, in a somewhat formless and intuitive fashion, she felt a slight undercurrent of distrust for Halloway. She combated the feeling as ungenerous, but could not wholly overcome it.

In constant conflict with these moments of misgiving there were other and wilder moments when the draw and pull of his fascination seemed invincible. At those times she realized that should he open his arms and say, "Come!" she would have to go as iron filings go to the magnet. To Alexander the whole world of love was in a nebulous and inchoate state of eruption and flux.

But she had by instinct a wary defensiveness, and she was on constant guard.

"Alexander," said Halloway one day, when they were walking together along the creek-bed between the dark, waxy masses of the rhododendron, "hit strikes me right forcible thet fer a gal thet didn't hev no time of day fer any man, ye've done swung round mighty suddent. They hangs around ye now like bees around locust-blooms!"

"Did ye 'low thet if I let any come, I'd refuse ter welcome the balance?" she inquired.

"Most women contrives ter satisfy themselves with one man, I reckon!" he retorted with more heat than he usually allowed himself.

"Thet's attter they've done picked out the one, for dead shore," was her calm retort. "An' mebbey even then hit hain't from choice."

A satirist might have derived pleasure from the situation of Alexander rejecting conventional pleas of propriety urged by Jack Halloway.

The big man had halted and stood looking down at her. His hands gradually closed, then tautly clenched themselves. For a moment he contemplated throwing away caution and seeking once more to coerce her responsiveness in the imprisonment of his sudden embrace; but he hesitated. Then, while he still kept silence, Alexander spoke with that simple candor which was a cardinal point of her nature.

"The gospel truth is, Jack, I don't know yit whether I loves ye er hates ye, an' I kain't help mistrustin' ye somehow. I mout es well tell ye the truth as ter lie ter ye."

"Mistrust me?" echoed the man incredulously. "Ye knows full well I loves ye. Ye kain't misdoubt thet!"

She shook her head. The sun was burning her hair into an aura. The clear light shone searchingly on the fresh bloom of her cheek, the violet of her eyes, and the crimson of her lips, revealing no flaw. She was all lovely and young, and yet Halloway thought that she was alarmingly, almost paradoxically, clever.

"Ye acts like ye loves me," was her seriously voiced response, "but somehow thar seems ter be a kind of greediness about hit. Take Bud Sellers, fer instance—he's jest the opposite. Thar hain't no greed in him."

Halloway might have retorted that there was also in Bud's dumb servitude nothing to which her flaming personality could ever respond; but he held his peace, while the girl went steadily on.

"I ofttimes takes myself ter task fer thet suspicion, because hit don't seem fair ter feel thetaway an' not know no reason."

She looked at him questioningly and very gravely, as one resolved upon a full but difficult confession.

"I hain't nuver seed ye foller no reg'lar work. Ye hain't doin' nothin' hyar now but jest hangin' around." She hesitated here, for she had reached the point of greatest embarrassment; but she forced herself ahead. "I hain't no millionaire myself, but we've got a good farm. Jack, thar's been times when I've wondered ef hit

wasn't my being as well-fixed as I am thet made ye think so master much of me!"

Then, indeed, the sprites and goblins of ironic mirth rioted in Halloway's brain. The surge of laughter that sought outlet from his lips came near to smothering him, but he succeeded in suppressing it—though the effort almost choked him. He, with a wealth which would have seemed to her as the treasure of the Incas, was falling under suspicion as a lazy fortune-hunter, seeking haven in the meager opulence of a mountain farm! Yet he dared not confess his real identity, for such an admission would stamp him an impostor.

"I reckon," he said generously, though with just a touch of hurt pride, "I kin live down thet distrust. Does ye suspicion Jerry O'Keefe, too, or jest me?"

"Nobody couldn't suspicion Jerry," she said softly. "He's as straight as a poplar saplin', an' as plain ter see through as a clear spring branch. He knows how ter gentle a woman, too."

"He don't understand ye, an' ye'd mighty soon sicken of jest bein' gentled," argued Halloway. "He hain't got no idee of the fires thet lays sleepin' in yore heart."

"He's got an idee of the fire in his own, I reckon," replied Alexander.

It is the accepted rule of the mountains that when two men arrive to "set up" with a girl at the same time, she must choose between them and send the less-favored away. Both Halloway and Jerry avoided the issue that might spring from such a situation. They met on the high-road with an outward show of their old accord, but perhaps the pretense was an empty shell—or fast becoming one. There was a tacit understanding between them that each should have certain evenings at Alexander's house.

In Jerry's good-natured, whimsical eyes there had settled of late an unaccustomed gravity. He was level-headed enough to recognize in Halloway a man who loomed brightly above others, and he had a genuine fear of such a formidable rival. It was O'Keefe's way to walk boldly and evenly through life, but a strong and tireless man will flinch in his gait from the hurt of a bruised foot; and with Jerry the bruise was about the heart—which is worse.

It was more in the casual meeting than by the formal call that O'Keefe conducted his courtship. He had a genius for appearing on the scene at the exact moment when

he could perform some simple service, and for meeting Alexander just when she least expected him.

There was constant danger of an explosion—and the danger was not diminished by the fact that Halloway always bore himself with entire politeness, yet with a courtesy which did not escape a sort of indulgent patronage, as if any serious thought of rivalry was absurd.

One day Bud Sellers came by the house. It was after he had been in jail, and Alexander, who was standing on her porch, invited him in. Slowly and somewhat dubiously he accepted the invitation.

"I hain't seed ye fer quite a spell, Bud," began the girl smilingly.

"Hit took holt on me ergin, Alexander," he answered, with a brick-red flush. "Hit war jest actually a burnin' me up."

She did not ask what Bud meant by "it," for she knew full well. She did not reproach him. She only inquired:

"What happened, Bud?"

"I kep' my pledge ter yer, though," he said gruffly. The sight of her was burning him up, too, with another kind of thirst. "I went an' hed myself jailed. I reckon hit won't hardly master me ergin fer a spell."

Alexander felt a lump rising in her throat. Since her awakening she had not missed the meaning of that look in Bud's eyes.

"Bud, war hit on account of me?" she inquired. "War ye frettin' over me not a keering?"

Sellers looked up in astonishment.

"How did ye know?" he demanded. "I hain't niver breathed no word ter ye erbout keerin'. I knowed full well hit warn't no manner of use."

"I'm a woman; now, Bud," she reminded him. "A woman don't need ter be told some things."

"I knowed hit warn't no use."

He only repeated the words dully. Alexander laid a hand on his trembling arm.

"Bud, Bud," she exclaimed self-accusingly, "I wisht I'd stayed a man! I don't seem ter do nothin' at this woman game but jest stir up trouble. I loves ye right dearly, Bud, but hit's the same fashion thet I loves my brother Joe—an' I reckon thet hain't what ye're a seekin'."

Bud drew back his shoulders and spoke with a brave assumption of restored cheerfulness.

"I'm a seekin' whatever I kin hev," he stanchly declared. "More 'n anything else, though, I'm seekin' ter see ye happy." He paused with a forced smile which, for all his effort, was stiff-lipped, and added slowly: "I reckon hit 'll be either Halloway or Jerry. They're both right upstandin' men."

"Sometimes I think hit won't be nobody," she declared. "I'd done been a boy so long thet since I turned back inter a gal ergin, the only thing I've been plumb sartain of air thet I hain't been sartain of nuthin'. Sometimes I think a heap of Jerry, but more times Jack Halloway seems ter p'intedly sot me on fire!"

Jerry was tramping along the highroad, whistling an old ballad of lugubrious tune, when a sharp turn brought him face to face with Jase Mallows. Jerry was for passing on with a brief salutation, but the other halted him and fell into voluble talk.

Jase complained that his wound had left after-effects which still gave him trouble.

"Hit's a turrible shame when a law-abidin' man kain't travel the highway withouten he's shot down like I was thet night," lamented Mallows virtuously. "I misdoubts ef I ever feels plumb right inside me ergin. I wisht I knowed who thet feller war!"

"Mebby he mistook ye fer somebody else," suggested Jerry. "Thet war the same night them highwaymen sought ter layway Alexander. Thar war right smart shootin' goin' on hyar an' thar."

"Did ye ever gain any knowledge of who them fellers war?"

Mallows sought to couch his question in a tone of sympathy for the wrongs of another, but just a shade too much eagerness on his part marred the effect. Jerry smiled. He had caught the false note, and it piqued his curiosity, so with mountain secretiveness he became cryptic in his response.

"Waal, mebbly we hain't tellin' all we knows—not jest yit. Mebbly we're kinderly bidin' our time fer a leetle spell. Mebbly hit won't be long now!"

That was not a comprehensive announcement, but it happened to start a train of serious thought in the hearer. Jase had recently returned from Coal City, and there he had talked with men who were watching with alarm the possibilities of an impending trial. The man who had shot his neighbor over a fence-line dispute was to face his prosecutors at the next term of court.

If he talked too much, large and portentous results might ensue. But the State would know nothing of its potential leverage on the accused unless Halloway, O'Keefe, or Alexander broke silence. It followed that their silencing was highly important.

Through Jase's thoughts ran, in a threatening refrain, the words:

"Mebby hit won't be long now!"

That evening, despite the pain that his wound still gave him, Jase saddled his mule and started back to Coal City to convene a committee of ways and means.

## XXIV

THE mail came irregularly to Shoulderblade Branch, but even irregular deliveries may bring bad news. One day Halloway received a letter containing a summons which he could not disregard. He had spoken contemptuously to Brent of money-grubbing, but his wealth carried certain responsibilities which even he acknowledged.

He was perfectly willing that his world should see in him an incorrigible scoffer at moral conventions. He rather enjoyed being the subject of maternal warnings to young daughters; but in financial affairs no stern moralist could have been more observant of rigid integrity. The business involved in the letter does not concern this narrative beyond the fact that it called him in peremptory terms away from Alexander.

He had one more evening with her before starting, and he meant to make the most of it. If there was in him any power of hypnotism—and he still believed that there was—he intended to exert it to the full.

Even in midsummer there are chilly nights in the mountains, and as he approached Alexander's house he thought gratefully of the fire that would be burning on her hearth. When he entered she was sitting alone at a small table, sewing, and she did not rise to welcome him. Lamp and firelight mingled in an orange and carmine glow that fell softly upon her.

Halloway, pausing just inside the door, gazed at her, and for a moment the adventurous hunger that fed upon her beauty became a passionate avidity.

"Alexander," said Halloway slowly, "I've got ter go away fer a spell, an' I hates hit—I hates hit like all torment!"

She looked up quickly. His narrow scrutiny told him that she had given ever so slight a start, and that into her eyes had come a speedily repressed disappointment.

"I'll miss ye, Jack," she said simply. "What business calls ye away?"

That was an expected question, and the answer was ready.

"I've done heired a small piece of property from an uncle, 'way across the Ver-ginny line, an' I've got ter fare over thar an' sign some papers."

"How long does ye 'low ter be gone?"

He shook his head moodily.

"Hit's a long journey through the roughs, an' I don't know how much time I'll hev ter spend over the business; but I reckon ye knows that I won't tarry no longer than need be."

"Don't hasten unduly on my account," she coolly counseled him. "I'll strive ter make shift somehow ter go on livin'!"

The man had taken a chair near her, and was bending forward, almost, but not quite, touching her. Now he rose, and his voice trembled.

"Fer Heaven's sake, Alexander, don't belittle me ner make light of me ter-night. I kain't endure hit! Heven't ye got no idee how master much I loves ye? Don't ye see thet the two of us war made fer each other? I don't aim ter brag none, but ye knows I'm the only man hyarabouts thet understands ye—thet holds ye in full-high appreciation!"

"Air ye?" she inquired calmly, when he paused.

"Ye knows hit!" He was talking tumultuously, with the onrush of that dynamic spirit which drove him and gave him power. He stood there with his coat open over his magnificent chest, and his eyes alight with the forces that made him exceptional. "Ye knows thet you hain't no every-day woman, nuther. Ye knows thet the like of yore beauty hain't been seed afore in these hills—not in mortal feature, ner in the blossom'n' woods, ner in the blue skies over 'em all!"

Again he paused. Even while he adhered to a crude vernacular, there was in the cadence of his voice a forceful sort of eloquence. In the latent intensity of his personality dwelt a sheer wizardry which few women could have withstood.

"Hev ye ever seed a comet in the heavens?" he abruptly demanded, and, without waiting for a reply, swept rapidly on. "Well, ye're like ter a comet, Alexander. Every star thet shines out thar ter-night is hung high up in heaven, an' every one is bright; but when a comet goes sweepin'

across the skies, with a furrow of light trailin' along behind hit, we plumb fergits them leetle stars. Hit's like they'd all been snuffed. Hit's the same way with you, Alexander. Deep down in yore heart thar's powerful fires a burnin' thet no weak man kain't satisfy. When I looks at ye, I clean fergits every other star thet ever shone—because I've done seed *you*!"

Once more Alexander began to feel the uncertainty of reeling senses. His intonations were caresses. His eyes were beacons. She took a tight hold on herself, for, despite the spell that he was weaving about her, a voice within her cautioned:

"Be steady!"

"An' so, sence I'm the comet amongst them numerous small stars," she observed with an even voice, though her pulse was far from regular, "ye 'lows thet I'd ought ter belong ter *you*?"

He ignored the teasing twinkle in her eye.

"I 'lows thet hevin' wunst seed ye, an' loved ye, I hain't nuver goin' ter be satisfied with no lesser star!"

The fire had leaped up and the room had grown warm. Halloway, in his impetuous fashion, ripped off his coat, flinging it to the floor, and stood with his great shoulders and chest bulking mightily beneath his flannel shirt.

Under the hurricane sweep of his love-making, the girl from time to time closed her eyes in an effort to hold to her waning steadiness. This was one of those occasions when the fire in her responded to the fire in him; when she felt, with a sense of deep misgiving, that she could not resist him much longer.

"Alexander," said the man abruptly, dropping his voice from its impetuous pitch to a quieter and yet more ardent tone, "ye 'lowed wunst thet I shouldn't never tech ye withouten ye said I mout. I've done obeyed ye, but now"—he slowly extended both arms and stood upright in gladiatorial strength and compelling erectness—"but now ye're a comin' inter my arms—of yore own accord—because we was made fer each other!"

Again her lids came down over the girl's eyes, and her fingers tightly gripped the chair-arms for support. Something in her heart was driving her irresistibly into those outstretched arms, but something else—though that was growing weaker, she thought—kept whispering its warning:

"Steady, steady! This is a spell, but it isn't love!"

She heard the hypnotic voice again.

"Ye're a comin' inter my arms, Alexander. Ye're a comin'—now!"

Her glance, ranging in desperation, fell on his coat at her feet. With the instinct of grasping at any pretext for a moment of thought and reprieve, she exclaimed:

"Give me thet coat, Jack!" Having breathlessly gone that far, she was able to finish with greater self-command. "The linin's in rags. I kin be mendin' thet wust piece by the sleeve thar whilst ye talks."

"The coat kin wait," he declared.

Her line of defense was bending under the weight of his onslaught, and it was no time for trivial interruption, but Alexander leaned forward and picked up the garment. She had not yet begun to sew—her fingers lacked the needful steadiness—but she was making a pretense of studying the torn lining. She must avert her gaze from him for a moment or the tides that he was lashing about her would lift and carry her away.

Suddenly she gave a violent start, and from her lips explosively broke the one word:

"Jack!"

He knew that she was under a strained tension, and though her manner of uttering his name was in marked contrast to her previous effort to maintain self-control, he construed it as an evidence of final surrender to her emotions. She was already very pale, so she turned no paler, but in that moment something had happened to Alexander. Some thought or instinct or fact had brought her up short—transformed her out of weakness into strength. When she spoke again it was with the self-containment of one who has been near the cliff's edge, but who has definitely drawn back.

"I hed hit in my head ter ask ye a question," she announced slowly; "but I've done decided not ter do hit. This thread hain't suited ter the job. I'll git me another spool."

She rose from her chair. Dismayed at the astonishing swiftness of her change of mood, Halloway took an impulsive step toward her. His arms were still receptively outstretched, but suddenly he felt that that attitude had become absurd. An altered light shone in her eyes now, and it was unpleasantly suggestive of contempt. She turned absent-mindedly, still carrying the coat, and went into the other room.

What had happened, wondered the man? Something portentous had been born and matured in a breathing-space—but what it was he could not guess. He knew only that victory had been between his open fingers and had slipped away. In this new and hardened mood of Alexander's he might as well talk passionate love to the Sphinx.

But that was Alexander, he reflected. The tempestuous change from sun to storm was typical of her nature. She had been close to surrender, and had wrested her independence out of his closing grasp by pure will-power. The reaction, he inferred, had been instantaneous, and it had revived her old resentment against compulsion. Again he had lost—but also again he would win!

Alexander was not gone long, and she returned with an air of restored calm. The fingers that stitched industriously at his torn coat were as steady as before his coming.

"I don't aim ter be forced, Jack," she quietly announced. "Ye boasts thet ye kin make me come inter yore arms of my own free will. If ye kin, all right; but hit won't be afore ye fares back from yore journey. Hit won't be ter-night!"

Two weeks after Jack Halloway started on his alleged trip across the Virginia boundary, Alexander also set out upon a journey. She was going to Perry Center, and meant to remain there for some days, since matters concerning the farm were to be discussed with her uncle, Warwick McGivins. This was a much less arduous trip than her adventurous return from Coal City to Shoulderblade. It was midsummer now, and the railroad washouts had been repaired, so she had only to cross two mountain ridges and take the jerky little train at a point ten miles distant from her home.

Perry Center was a hub about which swung a limited perimeter of rich farming-lands. This fertile area was an oasis with steep desolation hedging it in on all sides; but within its narrow confines men could raise not only the corn which constituted the staple of their less fortunate neighbors, but the richer crop of wheat as well. Therefore the men about Perry Center were as sheiks among goatherds.

When Alexander set out on her ten-mile walk, hefting the pack that held her necessities for the journey, Jerry O'Keefe materialized, grinning amiably, from a clump of laurel. It was characteristic of Jerry to

appear from nowhere, as it were. He nodded, and his eyes were brimming with that infectious smile of his.

"I jest kindly happened ter hev a day off, Alexander," he assured her. "I 'lowed hit wouldn't hurt none fer me ter come along as far as the railroad-train with ye an' tote thet bundle."

She handed it over, and, since the trail there was narrow and thorn-hedged, she strode on ahead of him. Jerry was content, for through the midsummer woods, still dewy with morning freshness, he could follow no lovelier guide. The young Irishman could be silent as well as loquacious.

They had put two-thirds of the journey behind them when Alexander suggested:

"Let's rest hyar a spell. Hit's a right good place ter pause an' eat a snack."

They stood on a pinnacle where time-corroded shoulders of sandstone broke eruptively through the soil. Under a cluster of papaw trees there was a carpet of moss spread over ancient boulders, and off behind them stretched the nobility of forests unspoiled—of oak and ash and poplar and the mighty plumes of the pine. The crimson blossom of the trumpet-flower trailed everywhere, and a mighty vista was spread from foreground to horizon, where the ashy purple of the last ridge merged with the sky; but for Jerry the chief beauty was all close at hand.

"Alexander," he said, with his heart in his eyes, "ye're the purtiest gal I ever seed—the purtiest gal I reckon anybody ever seed!"

The tease in her came to the surface.

"Another feller likened me ter a comet among small stars, Jerry!"

"I reckon I kin hazard a guess who thet feller war," he answered soberly. "There's only one man hyarabouts thet's got a gift of speech like thet. Myself, I don't like ter think of ye as a comet, Alexander—they're so plumb out'n reach!"

She did not reply, and Jerry went on.

"An' yit mebbey he's right—I reckon thet's jest another reason for likenin' ye ter one. I reckon he knows, too, thet he flames right bright hisself!"

The girl lifted her brows questioningly.

"Hit's right hard fer me ter think erbout anything else," Jerry continued. "He stands betwixt me an' you, an' he bulks so big thet he's kindly hard ter git around."

Alexander was sitting on the mossy rock, her eyes wandering off across the far-flung

landscape. Now their gaze came back, recalled by something wistful in her companion's voice; and it occurred to her that this man himself would have towered above the generality.

"Ye're a right sizable sort of feller yore own self, Jerry," she reminded him.

He laughed a shade bitterly. It was a very unusual thing for bitterness to tinge Jerry's voice, and it augured a bruised heart.

"I'm big among leetle fellers," he replied; "but alongside him I'm a runt!"

"Ef he's got some things ye hain't got, like as not hit wucks t'other way round, too. Ye're strong enough, Jerry, an' ye've got gentleness."

Jerry leaned forward to her. His voice trembled, and his eyes broke into a sudden snap of flame.

"Alexander, ye knows the way I loves ye! Ye kain't fathom the full extent of hit all, but ye knows some small part of hit. Ye're good ter me, but when a man feels like I does toward *you*, thar hain't but one sort of goodness thet counts. I knows thet I cuts a sorry sort of figger alongside of him, an' I hev ter fight myself day-long an' night-long ter keep from hat-in' him fer hit. I hain't no Goliath out'n the Bible; but, atter all, a right puny leetle feller took *his* measure!"

He paused for an instant, and then, as Alexander did not speak, he swept on.

"I wants ye ter answer me one question—air hit jest because he's so monster big an' fine-lookin' thet ye thinks he's a piece of the moon?"

"I hain't nuver said I thought he was," she protested.

Jerry stubbornly proceeded, and no one looking at his set face could doubt that he meant all he said.

"Because ef thet's hit, Alexander, afore God Almighty I'm plumb willin' ter meet him an' fight him fer ye with my bare hands twell one of us dies! I hain't none afeared of him, ef so be I'm fightin' fer you; an' ef he wins the fight, I'd rather be dead anyhow!"

Alexander had never heard Jerry speak so passionately before. She thought that if such a combat took place, even with the odds uneven, the outcome would not be altogether certain.

Had Jerry known it, he was at that moment nearer to stirring the girl as Halloway had stirred her than he had ever been be-

fore. Nevertheless, her reply came in a grave and low-pitched voice.

"I hain't ter be won by no battle, Jerry."

"No, o' course not." With an effort, he had brought himself back to a quieter mood. He even sought valiantly to muster the old twinkle into his eyes and the familiar whimsical note into his tone. "But, atter all, I'm a right easy sort of feller ter git along with, an' I mout be kinderly handy around the house. These masterful husbands sometimes don't wear so well. Hit's like havin' ter live with a king, I reckon!"

It was the woman who insisted on gravity now.

"Look at me, Jerry," she commanded, and their glances held level as she went on in deep earnestness. "I'd hate fer the two of ye ter think thet I'm playin' fast an' loose with ye. I'd hate ter think hit myself. Hit hain't thet. I was raised up a boy, an' I thought I'd always stay so. Then I found I couldn't."

"Yes, I know thet, Alexander. Thar hain't no censure fer ye as ter thet."

"Mebby thar ought ter be, though; but ye see hit's kinderly like I was livin' in a new world—an' I don't know hit very well yit. I've got ter go slow. I hain't made up my mind an' then changed hit. I hain't blowed hot an' cold. Hit's jest thet I hain't been able ter come ter no conclusion one way ner t'other."

She had spoken with a defensive tone, but, as she finished, a prideful note crept into her voice.

"But when I *does* decide, I decides fer all time, an' the man I weds with kin shorely trust me!"

## XXV

JERRY bade Alexander farewell after depositing her parcel by the threadbare seat of the battered day-coach which was to carry her to Perry Center. As he said good-by, for once he was acting without his usual straightforwardness. He meant to go to Perry Center himself, but, being called by no business except to follow the girl he loved, he thought it wiser to make no announcement of his intention.

When the engine wheezed and groaned to its start, Jerry swung himself into the baggage compartment. After the passing of a safe interval, he presented himself, grinning, in the day-coach.

The girl pretended indignation, but her

wrath was neither convincing nor terrifying. After a space she inquired:

"Jerry, does ye know whar Jack Halloway come from afore he fust struck this section?"

O'Keefe shook his head.

"I don't jedgmatically know what creek he was borned on, ef thet's what ye means; but I reckon hit warn't so fur away."

Her eyes narrowed a trifle.

"Does ye even know — fer sure — thet he's a mountain man?"

Jerry laughed.

"I hain't nuver heered tell of no man thet war raised in the settlemint claimin' ter be a benighted boomer," he answered. "Hit's right apt ter be the other way round." He paused, and then judiciously added: "When a man's co'tin' a gal, he gin'rally seeks ter put hisself in the best light he kin—not the wust."

"Yes, thet sounds right reasonable," she admitted.

"What made ye ask, Alexander?"

After a dubious pause, she spoke hesitantly:

"I jest fell ter studyin' about hit. Ef I tells ye, ye mustn't never name the matter ter nobody."

"I gives ye my hand on thet."

"Waal, Mr. Brent told me afore he left thet ef I ever needed counsel I should write ter him. When Jack went away, I writ—an' yestiddy I got an answer back. My letter ter Mr. Brent asked the same question thet I jest put up ter you."

"What did Brent say?"

Alexander was looking out of the car window, with eyes that were serious and preoccupied.

"He said he knowed all about him; but thet a question like thet ought rightfully ter be put ter a man fust-handed. He bade me ask Jack myself when he come back; but he pledged hisself ter answer all my questions ef Jack should refuse when he hed the chanst."

The gray-blue eyes narrowed for a moment, then O'Keefe inquired:

"Does hit make any great differ whar a man was borned at?"

"Mebby not. I just fell ter wonderin'."

"Does ye want my fam'ly Bible ter look me up in?" demanded Jerry.

The girl laughed; but she did not tell Jerry what lay behind this whole discussion. She did not confide to him the mystery of the coat with a patched lining.

It had been a very old coat, though at one time—long ago—a good one, and already it had been patched and repatched. When Alexander had picked it up that night before Holloway's departure, as she struggled to resist the elemental surge of his whirlwind passion, its inner breast-pocket had spread a bit at the top, and her eyes had glimpsed a discolored tailor's label bearing the words "New York."

That had been the thing she needed—the floating spar to one who was drowning. It steadied her into instant resistance. She had gone to her own room, and there had read the full legend, which was almost but not quite obliterated by wear. Some letters were gone, but enough were left to make the words legible.

"Mr. J. C. Holloway," was written in ink, with a number on Fifth Avenue, New York. Then there was the tailor's name and address, the latter being also on that main thoroughfare of fashion.

Cumberland Mountain loggers do not have their clothes hand-tailored in Manhattan. The exact locality meant nothing to Alexander, but the town meant much.

The label was partly ripped away from the pocket, and the girl had snipped it loose altogether. Holloway had played a careful game. He had avoided carrying forwarded envelopes. He had held to the vernacular even at times when some sudden crisis threatened to drive him into forgetfulness. He had overlooked only one possible precaution—that of ripping out the tailor's trade-mark from his coat.

## XXVI

"Yes, we're right proud of thet thar wheat-elevator. We all went partners ter raise the money fer rearin' hit," said Warwick McGivins, as he dismounted from his old pacing mare and pointed to a large, wooden building that stood at the edge of a bluff, from which one could drop a rock down a sheer hundred and fifty feet.

Alexander, his niece, and Jerry O'Keefe, following suit, slid from their saddles, and the three walked through a wide gate over a set of wagon-scales and into the yard of the big structure.

"Kinderly looks ter me like ye'd done deesigned hit fer a fort ter fight Injins," suggested O'Keefe.

The guide nodded his iron-gray head.

"Hit don't hurt none ter hev a house like thet solid-timbered," he asserted.

"When the crop's in, thet buildin' holds about all the wheat thet the passel of us fellers raises amongst us, an' we seeks ter hev hit held safe. Thar's some car-loads in thar right now, an' threshin' time hain't nigh over yit."

Drawing a key from his pocket, he took them into the small office and showed them the spacious interior of the elevator. There were no windows save high overhead, and only two doors. One of these was a great sliding affair, where the wagons backed up; the other was small but equally solid. The building was a huge box of heavy timber, most of it constituting the bin itself, but the old fellow showed it proudly. Nor was his pride misplaced, for with this great cube of massive timber he and his neighbors had met and overcome a perplexing handicap of nature.

They climbed a ladder and looked down into the reservoir, partly filled with golden grain. Noticing a coil of rope hanging from an upright, Jerry inquired:

"Did ye hev a lynchin' in hyar by way of housewarmin'?"

McGivins laughed, but his narrative had not yet come to the uses of that rope, and he refused to be hurried.

"Ye see," he zestfully explained, "we've got a sort of table-land of wheat ground hyarabouts thet raises master crops, an' we've got a railroad runnin' right past our doors ter haul hit out ter the world below."

"No wonder folks hyarabouts hev got prosperity," mused Alexander a little enviously, thinking of her rocky hillsides on Shoulderblade.

"Yes, but the road didn't do us no great lavish of good twell we deeviseed this hyar thing," her uncle reminded her. "Hit jest kinderly aggravated us. Ye see our fields lays on high ground, an' the railroad runs through a deep gorge. We kain't git down ter hit, nigh as hit be, withouten we teams over slavish ways fer siv'ral steep miles. Now I'll take ye down the clift an' show ye what's down thar, an' how we licked thet mountain."

He led them out and down a narrow path, where they had to hold to branch and root, until they reached the bottom of a deep ravine. There, one hundred and fifty feet lower, was another large bin, open at the top, and connected with the upper structure by an almost vertical chute. It was a piece of highly creditable engineering. It enabled the grower to weigh and

store his product above, and then, by opening the runway, to deposit it at the rails.

In only one respect would an engineer have quarreled with the arrangement. The long lever that loosened and held the flowing tide of grain operated from outside the upper building, instead of from within.

"What's ter hinder a thief from comin' in the night-time," demanded Jerry practically, "runnin' hisself out a wagon-load of thet thar stuff, an' haulin' hit off?"

The elder's face fell a little.

"Thet's a fair question," he acknowledged; "but we couldn't skeercely tutor hit no otherwise. We keeps thet lever fastened with a chain an' padlock."

"But how about the rope?" persisted O'Keefe.

"Sometimes we has ter nail up loose planks inside thet runway," the older man explained. "When we does, a feller lets hisself down on thet rope."

In a week the midsummer term of the high court would convene, and the case of the man who had wounded his neighbor would be called for trial. The activities of possible informers again became a pregnant danger to the erstwhile Kuklux operators, and again a squad of men with rifles set out to cope with the situation.

Halloway had slipped away for the time being, but the movements of Jerry and Alexander had been duly watched and reported. It did not altogether please the men charged with this new duty to operate about Perry Center. They would have preferred the wilder territory adjacent either to Shoulderblade Creek or to Coal City; but the thing had to be accomplished. After all, if Perry Center lay in a more civilized district, it was still mountain country, and wild enough, if one were careful.

On an evening gorgeously illuminated by a full moon, Jerry came to the house of Warwick McGivins, as was his custom. These were times when he did not have to consider sharing the right of way with a rival, and he was availing himself of his undisputed privilege.

Shadows of deep purple-blue lay everywhere like velvet islands in the silver flood of the moon's radiance. Over the timbered slopes came the soft cadences of the night's minstrelsy—the croak of frogs, the shrilling of crickets, and the plaintive call of the whippoorwills. Alexander had been deeply reflective as she sat, with her lovely chin

resting on one hand, and listened to the low-pitched voice in which her lover was pleading his cause.

"I kain't be sure—not yit," was her uncertain response to all his argument.

They saw a shadow fall across the lighted doorway at their backs, and heard the voice of Warwick McGivins.

"I've got ter go over ter the wheat-elevator, I reckon. I kain't find the key no-whars, an' I mistrusts I left hit in the door when I war weighin' up wheat this evening. I'll jest leave the two of ye hyar fer a spell."

Jerry rose obligingly to his feet.

"I reckon my legs is a few years younger than yourn," he announced cheerfully. "I'll go over thar fer ye. Hit hain't but a whoop an' a holler distant, nohow."

"Hit's a right purty night," volunteered Alexander in a voice of vague restlessness. "I don't kinderly feel like settin' still. I'll go along with ye, Jerry."

The young man's eyes brightened delightedly. It had been a strain on his innate courtesy to surrender so much of his moonlight evening with Alexander, and now he had his reward. There had been unrest in her eyes that night; yet somehow he had felt her nearer to him, and his bruised feelings were stirring into fresh hope.

Together they started out, and under the spell of the night's graciousness one of those silences that seem a bond of sympathy fell between them.

The way led along the highroad for a short distance, and then turned off into the woods, where the rhododendron was massed thick. Here there was more of the velvet shadow and less of the direct moonlight, but it still fell through the open spaces in patterns of platinum brightness.

Once Jerry halted abruptly and stood listening; then he went on again.

"I heered hit, too," said Alexander understandingly, for in the hills one pauses to question unexplained sounds in the night-time. "I reckon hit war some varmint stirring."

The route they had taken led along the margin of the bluff. They were close to the elevator, walking single file, with Alexander in the lead, when the serenity was broken by the sharp and malignant sound of a barking rifle.

Jerry heard the whining flight of the bullet, which had missed his head by inches. As if in obedience to a single impulse, both

the girl and the man fell flat to the better concealment of the ground, and edged back into the darkly shadowed laurel.

"We've got need ter separate," whispered Jerry, with his lips brushing her ear. "I aims ter git inside the elevator, an' hold 'em off. You hasten down over the cliff an' work back ter the house. I reckon hit's me they wants, but I'll endure twell ye brings help."

Without wasting a needless word or breath in argument, Alexander began noiselessly twisting her way toward the brow of the precipice. Jerry's heart was pounding with terror lest she should be discovered. To divert from her an attention that might prove fatal, he recklessly rose and leaped across a spot of moonlight—making a fleeting target which brought answering shots from two separate sources.

The man knew now that whoever his assailants might be, they were out in force and in earnest. Cautiously he worked his way along the shadows, his luck still holding, until finally he had reached a point within a few yards of the open gate that led to the elevator itself. To gain that haven he must dash across a band of moonlight. Once inside, he had only to wait for the relief of reinforcements.

To the right and left of him, from several spots at once, O'Keefe heard stirrings in the thicket. There must be a sizable pack out on the hunt, and he surmised that they were making those unnecessary noises with the purpose of drawing his fire and leading him to betray his precise whereabouts by the spurt of his pistol.

The door of the elevator stood partly in the moonlight. Jerry O'Keefe could see the dull glitter that he knew to be the key, and could even make out—or so he thought—that the door stood an inch or two ajar.

Of that he was not quite certain, and it was a vitally important point. If the lock was not caught, he might get in before he could be killed. If he had to fumble with a key, his end was sure.

Jerry drew himself together and made the dive. Four rifles spoke in unison, and four bullets embedded themselves in the heavy timbers of the great building as he hurled himself against the door, which opened to admit him, and the next instant he was safe inside.

He had not fired a shot, and between himself and his enemies stood stout walls against which their bullets would pelt as

harmlessly as hailstones. Except for his anxiety about Alexander, Jerry might have lighted his pipe and waited with a contented spirit.

Indeed, a slow smile did shape itself on his face, but a startling thought wiped it away as swiftly and completely as a wet sponge obliterates writing on a slate. Jerry drew his pistol, and for a moment it was in his mind to open the door and go out again.

When he had sent the girl away for reinforcements, it had not occurred to him that this ambuscade might be intended to include her as well as himself. He had thought that once apart from him she could walk safely, unless mistaken for him in the darkness. He had been at a total loss to explain the motive of the attack; but now it flashed upon him that it was somehow an outgrowth of the old attempt to waylay and rob Alexander. If that were true, as high a price lay on the girl's head as upon his own; and she was out there alone, and in all likelihood unarmed!

Jerry O'Keefe broke into a cold sweat of panic. He sat with his ears strained for a pistol-shot—a shout—any indication that might call him across the moonlight zone beyond the door to her defense.

But the stillness of the midsummer night had settled down again, except for the voices of nocturnal birds and insects.

By this time, he tried to reassure himself, Alexander had made her way down into the gorge and was beyond the touch of danger. But that was not true. The girl had had to step so cautiously as to break no twig and rustle no shrub. She must twist along a course that avoided the patches of moonlight, weaving her way in and out. It was distressing to move so slowly, but it would mean greater and more effective haste later on. She had even paused, crouching, with bated breath, at a spot from which she could watch the door of the elevator, until Jerry had made his dash. With a heart swollen and strained by dread, she had seen him shoot across the exposed space and burst through the door—and she had heard the fusillade intended to prevent his escape.

But was it an escape? He had plunged through the dark opening much as a falling man might go. Whether safe, wounded, or dead, he was inside, and they could not reach him, at least for a time; so it behooved Alexander to use wary care to the end that she might bring him help.

As she came to two large boulders, between which she meant to start down into the gorge, she was arrested by a flicker of light. The rock shielded from view a man who seemed to be kindling a pine torch; but the flare had warned her in time to make her crouch low and consider her course. The path that she had chosen was cut off.

Then low and guarded voices stole across to her with the light.

"Whar's the gal? She didn't git inside, too, did she?"

"No, 'pears like she's done hid away; but I reckon they'll diskiver her afore she gits far."

"Don't let's waste no time, then. Ye've done splashed coal-oil on the corner of the warehouse, hain't ye?"

"Yes."

"Waal, come on. Ye've got yore torch ready. Let's tech her off. He thinks he's safe enough inside thar, but right shortly he'll sing another tune!"

Alexander fell, for a moment, into a tremor and chill of wild panic. Suddenly, yet beyond all shadow of doubt, she knew that the man who was doomed to a certain and most horrible death was to her the person of supreme consequence in all the world. The dynamic qualities of Halloway were nothing, and less than nothing, now. She wanted that gentle strength and that whimsical smile that were soon to be licked up in flame and torture.

If Jerry were not saved she could no longer endure to live—and there was no way of saving him!

While Alexander crouched there with her blood congealed, she saw the torch applied, saw its flame leap ravenously to the kerosene and secure a hold upon the building itself as sure and tenacious as the grip of a bulldog's clamped jaws.

The plotters who fired the elevator showed her only their backs.

How long would it be before the man inside realized his fate? What would he do then? Presumably he would dash for the door, and there both flame and rifle-fire would be awaiting him.

The incendiaries had now passed around the corner of the house, and the moonlight fell upon the long chute which ran almost vertically down to the railroad-track below. Into Alexander's mind shot a desperate resolution. It offered a slender chance at best, yet the only one.

For a moment she questioned it. There were so many ways that it might turn out, and, of them all, one only could possibly bring success.

Then she slipped over to the great handle that controlled the flow of grain, locked into place with its chain and padlock. If she were seen, she would no doubt be killed; but the murderous crew seemed to have massed at the front of the place now, intending to watch the door until the progress of the fire should take that task off their hands.

The flames were crackling loudly enough to cover the noise which must attend her next move, and they afforded her light for her work.

A heavy iron bar lay on the ground. The girl forced the chain with it, and bent all her strength to the great lever that should launch the stored wheat into its quicksand flow. She flung her good muscles and her substantial weight so fiercely into the effort that the shaft snapped at its fulcrum—but not until it had done its work.

Alexander rushed for the brow of the cliff, and this time she met no enemy. The relaxed vigilance of a job well done had stolen upon the watchers. The journey down the precipice was one that had its difficulties, and Alexander's brain was reeling with a score of terrors; yet somehow she reached the railroad.

O'Keefe would not be in the wheat-bin itself, she reflected. It would be dark in there, too—until the light became a glare of death. Unless he chanced to hear, through other and fiercer sounds, the soft flow of the myriad kernels, he would have no means of knowing that one desperate method of escape was being opened to him. Even then his only chance would lie in quickness of perception and sureness of judgment in a critical moment.

If he saw that the wheat was running out, and did not wait for it all to spill itself, he would be sucked into its tide and suffocated. For it flowed slowly, pressing in every direction, and it would inevitably strangle the breath out of his body.

Even if he were judging all these things with a meticulous nicety, Alexander questioned herself breathlessly, would there be time to wait for the stored grain to flow through that narrow channel? It was a race between a slow tide that could not be hurried and another which rushed on with devouring fury.

The girl threw herself down beside an empty freight-car and dug her cold fingernails into her hot temples. She could hear the steady stream of wheat flowing into the lower bin, and the deadly slowness of its progress through the hopper was driving her mad. The elevator she could not see, but by lifting her head she could make out all too clearly the crimson glare overhead.

## XXVII

WHEN the first acrid warning of scorched timbers came to his nostrils, Jerry O'Keefe had recognized the desperation of his plight and had framed his simple plans in accordance. He meant to stay where he was till the last endurable moment, hoping against hope for the coming of rescuers. When it was no longer possible to remain, he would go out of the door and sell his life at a price. He knew that he would have to sell it, and perhaps cheaply, for the murderers would do their killing from cover.

He struck a match for a survey of the place where he must make his last stand, and his eye fell on the coil of rope. Then, for the first time, he remembered its use, and vainly wished that the chute could be opened from within. By the light of other matches he looked over into the great bin, and what he saw astonished him. There was a moving suction at the center of the pile—a slow motion and a sinking, though this afternoon the stuff had been heaped into a well-rounded mound.

Further scrutiny verified the amazing results of his first impression. The hopper was open!

Jerry O'Keefe smiled grimly. His enemies had an ironic sense of humor, he thought. They meant to give him a choice of deaths—death at the door by flame and lead, or death in the sluice by suffocation.

Then an incredulous exclamation burst from his lips. Was there not a wild chance that this opening of a possible avenue of escape might be Alexander's work? It seemed unlikely, almost inconceivable, but in the way of resourcefulness and adroitness of thought nothing was quite inconceivable of Alexander.

She knew of the rope and its former use. That meant that the flowing tide of grain would not spell death for him if he waited long enough and acted wisely enough.

Presumably these enemies were not neighbors, for if they had been they would not be burning their own wheat. If that

were granted, it might follow that they would not know of the rope.

Jerry breathed deeply, and a desperate smile came for an instant to his tight lips.

He was watching the unhurried flow of outrunning wheat and gaging, as was the girl below, the racing progress of the conflagration. Would there be time?

The door was cut off by sheets of fire now, and he no longer had any alternative. If the flames reached him before the wheat was out, he must die.

He uncoiled the rope and threw its loose end into the bin, watching with a fascinated gaze the fashion in which it was dragged inward and downward.

In the increasing heat he had thrown off his coat, and now his shirt went, too. The sweat poured out of his naked chest and shoulders.

From rafters below him shot wicked tongues of widening flame. His breath was labored and his life seemed to wither. There was only a little grain left now at the bottom of the receptacle, but there was also little strength or endurance left in Jerry. His eyes smarted horribly, and he felt that he could no longer support his weight on a rope by the strength of his arms. He had climbed to the edge of the bin, and clung there. Then he fainted, and fell inward.

But the moment had arrived when at last the way was clear. The chute, polished smooth by the flowing kernels, did not even leave a splinter in his bare flesh, and when he shot down and out he fell on the soft mound of wheat that had gone before him.

Alexander's straining eyes saw his body flash into sight, and saw that it seemed lifeless. With a cry that she tried to stifle, and could not, she called upon her last strength, and climbed into the great pen where Jerry lay insensible.

The murderers had gone away. Their task seemed complete, and they had no wish to tarry too long after the countryside had been aroused by that beacon of fire.

It was some time later that neighborhood searchers found Alexander sitting on a mound of salvaged wheat, with the head of an unconscious man in her lap. It was a man stripped to the waist, sweat-covered, and smoke-blackened. The girl was mumbling incoherent things into his unresponsive ear.

"Ye saved the wheat fer us, anyhow—an' the doctor says he hain't hurted none

beyond bein' scorched up some," declared Warwick McGivins that same night at his own house.

Alexander, worn out by her long vigil of terror, but with eyes that glowed with triumph and with love, replied:

"I've saved somethin' better then a mighty heap of wheat!"

Jerry spoke from the bed, where he lay conscious now, but still very weak.

"Things looked mighty unsartain—fer a spell!"

"Nothin' hain't never goin' ter be unsartain fer us from now on," the girl answered in a silvery voice that held the thrill of invincible courage. "Hit takes fire, I reckon, ter weld iron, but—"

The enfeebled man tried to raise himself on his elbow, but she gently pressed him back.

"Does ye mean hit, Alexander?" he whispered tensely. "Hit hain't jest because I've been hurted a leetle, an' ye're compassionate fer me?"

"Jerry," she said, and her voice became all at once softly tremulous, "jest as soon as ye're able, I wants ye ter take me in yore arm—an' I don't never want ye ter let me go ergin!"

"I'll git thet strong right soon," he declared with a fervor that brought the strength back to his voice and a sparkle into his bloodshot eyes.

Jack Halloway came into his rooms one day in early September, and ran through some mail that lay piled on his table. He was not in a happy humor. His business in the great city had dragged out to the annoying length of six weeks, and his mind was busy with anxiety centering on the hills.

As his thoughts ran irritably along, the hand that had lifted an envelope out of the collection became rigid. It was a very

plain envelope, and quite unaccountably it had been postmarked at the post-office near the mouth of Shoulderblade Creek. Who, down there, could know his New York address? It could not be Brent, for this was not Brent's hand.

He ripped the thing open, and from the unfolded sheet there fell a tiny scrap of some sort. It was a small strip of soiled cloth, and he let it lie on the table while he read the note itself.

The first paragraph brought from his lips an exclamation of dismay and alarm. He paused for a moment to collect himself before finishing. The letter ran:

DEAR JACK:

You will wonder how I knew where to send this letter, but you see I did know.

Jerry and I were married a week ago, and all the neighbors came to our infare to wish us well. I saw to it that every man there took off his hat. I am sending you the tag that was on your coat the day I mended it. It wasn't heedful for you to leave it there. That's how I knew where you were apt to be now—instead of Virginia, as you said.

The man paused again, and his great hand shook with disappointment and chagrin. Finally he turned the sheet and read the conclusion.

Seeing that tag gave me warning just in time, the night you bragged that you could make me come into your arms. Next time, Jack, I counsel you to be honest with the girls you make love to. They like it.

Come and see us when you get back to the mountains.

ALEXANDER MCGIVINS.

P. S.—I promised my paw to keep my own name when I was wed, and Jerry doesn't mind.

The letter slipped from nerveless fingers and floated down to the floor. At last Halloway picked up the tailor's label and turned it in his fingers absent-mindedly, as if he was not yet quite sure what he was doing.

THE END

### SOUL SIGHT

You have no joy in music,  
Yet cannot choose but hear;  
And you, no eye for beauty  
When she is everywhere!

I know a deaf and dumb man,  
I know a man who's blind—  
And one hears angels singing,  
One, sightless, views the wind!

Harry Kemp